A BRIEFE EXPLANATION OF THE WHOLE BOOKE of the Prouerbs of *Salomon*.

By ROBERT CLEAVER.

AT LONDON
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TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVLL THOMAS CREVV Eſquier, grace, mercie, and peace be multiplied in Ieſus Chriſt.

SIR, hauing been certaine yeeres ſince, more preſt, and forward to offer our ſelues to be doing, then duly conſiderate what a burdenous taske wee ſhould vndergoe, one of vs vndertook the explication of the Prouerbs of Salomon, *and the other to further the ſame by inſpection, and aſſiſtance in difficult & doubtfull places, when need ſhould require. But we found it a matter of greater trauell, and longer labour then we thought of, and haue met with ſuch interruptions as we had iuſt cauſe to looke for, but did not ſufficiently foreſee: for (beſides that the booke is wholly ſententious, and the vnfolding of ſentences requireth breuitie, and perſpicuitie, with truth, and ſoundnes, which cannot be attained vnto without mature deliberation and ſtudie) the Lord himſelfe did ſtop our paſſage with his owne hand, for a ſeaſon, by viſiting one of vs, euen him who was to doe the worke, and ſuſtaine the burthen of the buſineſſe, with ſuch defect of health and ſight, as did actually prohibite our courſe of proceeding. But now (by his good hand) that let being remoued, and his aſſiſtance miniſtred vnto vs, we at the laſt haue waded thorow the booke, or rather haue ſwomme ouer it: for it is ſo profound and deepe with perfect excellencie, that neither we, or any man elſe can diue to the bottome of it.* Salomon *himſelfe was farre too low of ſtature, and not tall enough in vnderſtanding, euen (when he knew moſt) to ſtand in it, and hold vp his head abone the myſticall waters of*

admirable wisedome, although his tongue did speake it, and his hand penne it. We haue by due consideration with our selues, and iudicious aduice from our wise and learned brethren, proceeded in a course different from our beginning, labouring only to make the text as plaine and conspicuous, as wee could in so few words, without our former additions of Doctrines and Vses. For we saw the time would be long before we could finish the worke: the printing would be chargeable, if wee should liue to bring it to the presse: the bookes would be deare to such as should buy them: and the paines would be tedious to those which should reade them: and albeit some might haue more benefit by so large a volume, yet more may haue some benefit by this compendious contriuall: for the very knowledge of the right sense of the Scriptures (which in this marke we chiefly aime at) is very commodious in sundrie respects, and the ground-worke of all pietie. That maketh Ministers to be fruitfull Preachers: that maketh priuate persons to be profitable hearers: that yeeldeth matter of wholesome meditation to the minde: that putteth vigour of good affections into the heart: that ministreth store of vsefull speeches to the lippes, and that prepareth a way for faith, for repentance, and all internall graces and externall obedience to the whole man. The want hereof is the cause why the words of God are so much by some perverted publikely to such purposes, as the holy Ghost neuer intended, both presses, and pulpits (which is with teares to be lamented) sending out so many erroneous writings, and sayings, for the confirmation of seperation, superstition, iniustice, sensuall lusts, and all manner of licentiousnes: and why being by others soundly alleaged they are so greatly mistaken, and worke no better effects in those to whom they are preached. For this cause wee haue not been altogether remisse in searching out, and sounding the sense of euery sentence of this booke, or in pondering the force of euery word which may seeme to carrie some weight, so farre as our knowledge, or meanes would extend: but if the learned of better iudgement shall any where finde vs failing, let them bee pleased to make it appeare vnto vs, and wee doe promise not to stand wilfully, or peremptorily in any error, but to be attentiue to their reasons, and reformable in our opinions. What wee haue

done

done herein, we thinke it our dutie to recommend as a teſtimonie of our loue to your Worſhips patronage, not doubting but that you will diligently reade, and wiſely iudge of it, as you doe of other bookes of this nature, notwithſtanding your manifold and weightie imployments otherwiſe. Wee reſt aſſured of your charitable minde, that without offence you will beare with our homely kinde of writing, although it be deuoid of all poliſhment, and elegancy, conſidering that we make but an expoſition to informe the iudgement in the meaning of the Scripture, and not a diſcourſe to worke vpon affections: it is ſufficient that the foundation ſtones lying in the ground, bee firme, and ſtable, although not beautifully hewen, carued, or grauen. The ſentences which we explaine are excellent as well for matter, as manner, and defectiue in nothing that may giue ſatisfaction to the beſt qualified, and moſt compleate Chriſtian in the world. Wiſe readers therefore (we doubt not) will be intreated to content their eyes with the bright and ſhining beames thereof, that they may not neede to require any exact perfection in this our dimme and duskiſh Commentarie. A plaine iron key will ſerue for good vſe, to vnlocke the doore of a golden treaſurie. The marke that we aime at herein is the glorie of God, and the edification of his ſeruants, and not our owne praiſe and commendation for eloquence. And thus with remembrance of our dutie, referring the whole worke to your wiſe and loning conſideration, wee commit you and your gracious yoke-fellow to the bleſſed protection of God Almightie, beſeeching him daily more and more to multiplie all his graces and mercies vpon your ſelfe, and yours. Draiton
this 10. *of May* 1615.

Your Worſhips in all dutie to be commanded,

IOHN DOD.

ROBERT CLEAVER.

A BRIEFE EXPLANATION OF THE whole booke of the Prouerbs of SALOMON.

CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *The Parables of Salomon the sonne of Dauid, King of Israel.*

IN this whole booke we are to consider first the title or inscription, being as it were the head thereof, laid downe in this present verse, and the fiue next following, and then the tract or treatise as the body of the same, from the beginning of the seuenth verse, to the end of the last Chapter. In the title God giueth a singular commendation of the booke, first from the subiect matter: secondly from the Scribe or penman (both which are described in this our text) and thirdly from the end and vse thereof, as shall appeare in the words ensuing. The matter of it is *Parables*, whereby are sometimes meant darke, and mystical sayings, not easie to be vnderstood, as when they say to Christ, *Why speakest thou to them in parables?* And a- Matth.13.10. gaine, *Loe now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no parable:* Ioh.16.29. sometimes a borrowed speech, a similitude, or comparison, as when it is said, *All these things spake Iesus to the multi-* Matth.13.34.

vnto parables: and sometimes short, and sweete prouerbiall sentences, full of weight, and wisdome, as when it is said: *My mouth shall speake of wisedome, and the meditation of mine heart is of knowledge. I will incline mine eare to a parable, and vtter my graue matter vpon the harpe.* And here now doth the word beare all these senses in this place. The Scribe whom God vsed as his Secretarie, or penman, was *Salomon*, who is described by his parentage, as being *Dauid* his sonne, and by his dignitie, that he was a King, whose honourable estate is illustrated by his glorious dominion, or subiects, *Israel*, the people of the Lord, whom hee had chosen to be his portion, and the lot of his inheritance, and that whilest they were in their perfection of beauty, both for Church and Common-wealth, making but one, and the same entire, and vndiuided bodie, not yet dismembred, nor rent asunder one tribe from another, as afterwards they were in the succeeding ages.

Verse 2. *To know wisedome and instruction, to vnderstand the words of knowledge.*

HEre beginneth the third part of the inscription, wherein is contained the vse, and end of this booke, which is twofold: First, generall, such as is common to all, vers. 2. 3. Secondly, speciall, such as concerneth some kinds of men, vers. 4. 5. 6.

The generall vse is partly for the minde, and vnderstanding, as in this verse, partly for the practise, and waies, as will appeare in the next. Our text saith, that it was written to incite, and teach men to *know wisedome*, to attaine vnto, and proceed in the knowledge of things that make a man wise to saluation: and *instruction*, to wit, the meanes whereby wisedome is to be obtained, as doctrine, exhortation, reprehension, &c. *and to vnderstand the words of knowledge*, those sayings, and sentences, wherein knowledge, and wisedome is deliuered.

Verse 3. *To receiue the instruction of vnderstanding, of iustice, iudgement, and equitie.*

THe knowledge mentioned in the former verse, is amplified in this, both by the cause of it, instruction receiued, whereby vnderstanding is gotten, and the effects of it: the first whereof is *iustice*, which is not restrained to the Magistrates office, nor to the duties of the second table of the commandements, but to be extended to all the waies of men, that they be warrantable, and lawfull: the second is *iudgement*, which is with mature deliberation to regard all causes, and circumstances, that any way tend to the due manner of our proceedings: the third is *equitie*, that we doe not only walke with an euen foote, neither turning to the right hand, nor to the left, but to propose a right end also in all that we deale in, with truth of heart, and vprightnes.

Verse 4. *To giue to the simple sharpnesse of wit, and to the child knowledge, and discretion.*

THe generall vse of this booke, and that which is common to all, hath been shewed in the two former verses: now here followeth that which is speciall, and concerneth some kinds of men, as the simpler sort in this verse, and the learneder in the next.

And it is vttered by way of anticipation, or obiection that might be made against the premises, in this manner: These Prouerbs are profound, and deepe sentences, and the more short they are, the more hard and obscure they be: well may great schollers, and men of much learning gather wisedome, and knowledge from them, but wee that are simple and sillie persons, vnlettered, vnlearned, and dull of vnderstanding, shall neuer be able to reape any profit by them: Yes (saith he) all sorts, that are exercised in them aright, shall receiue good by them, one as well as another. The first sort he calleth by two names, *simple*, and *childeren*: by simple, vnderstanding those

Pron.14.5. persons, whom elsewhere he calleth *foolish*, ignorant, vnskilfull, and such as beleeue euery thing told them, and yeeld to euery thing imposed vpon them. To these this booke will giue sharpnes of wit, that is, a good capacitie, with quicknes of conceit, cunning (as the word signifieth) or subtiltie: but such as is harmelesse, and holy, not whereby they are apt to beguile others, but able (notwithstanding their doue-like simplicitie) to beware and take heed to themselues, that they Matth.10.16. be not beguiled of others: which kinde of wisedome our Sauiour himselfe commendeth in the Gospell. By *child* he meaneth not babes and infants by age, through want of yeeres, but whatsoeuer yeeres they haue on their backes, hee calleth them children, if they be nouices lacking iudgement, and vnderstanding, or rash, vnsetled or mutable in that which they know. To these this booke will giue knowledge, and discretion, soundnes in iudgement, staiednes in affection, and prudence in ordering all their waies.

Verse 5. *A wise man shall heare and increase in learning, and a man of vnderstanding shall attaine vnto wise counsels.*

Verse 6. *To vnderstand a parable, and the interpretation, the words of the wise, and their darke sayings.*

NOw wee come to the second sort of them, to whose vse and profit the Prouerbs are destinated, who are set forth by two titles: first they are said to be *wise* indeed, with an excellent knowledge of things diuine, and humane: secondly, they are called *men of vnderstanding*, such as are qualified with an excellent facultie of perceiuing, discerning, and iudging of things, that they are not easie to bee misled, or deceiued.

And these words as well as the former tend to the preuention of an obiection, which out of the former might be raised in this manner: If your sayings and sentences be so plaine and easie, that the simple may sound them, and the child may comprehend them; what good will they doe to the wise and learned? men of iudgement and knowledge shall lose their labour,

bour, and miſpend their time in reading of them, what ſhall they get more then they haue alreadie? Yea (ſaith hee) the greateſt Clerkes, and deepeſt Diuines, may gather inſtruction from them, as well as the vulgar and meaner ſort of people. They are ſhallow enough for a little childe to wade in, and deepe enough for a great Leuiathan to ſwimme in. And therfore it is ſaid that a *wiſe man by hearing ſhall increaſe in learning*, that is, there ſhall be added to him a great meaſure of knowledge, *and ſhall attaine to wiſe counſels*, to wit, ſhall bee inabled to get and purchaſe, poſſeſſe, and keepe *induſtrious counſels or thoughts*, euen ſuch whereby he may be as skilfull in things pertaining to him and his affaires, as the Maſter of a ſhip is in ſtearing and gouerning it in the greateſt dangers: for from thence is the word borrowed. Now this is further amplified in the ſixth verſe, that they ſhall cauſe him to vnderſtand (for ſo the Hebrew word ſignificth) *a parable*, any prouerbiall ſentence, though difficult and obſcure to others, and *the interpretation thereof*, the true ſenſe and meaning of it, *the words of the wiſe, and their darke ſayings* euen to diſcerne of, and vnfold, the moſt intricate points, and to anſwere to the hardeſt queſtions or riddles, (as the originall text importeth) ſuch as the Queene of Sheba poſed *Salomon* withall. 1. King. 10. 1. 3.

Verſ. 7. *The feare of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fooles deſpiſe wiſedome, and inſtruction.*

THus much concerning the title or inſcription: now followeth the treatiſe it ſelfe, which hath two parts: firſt, the preparation to the prouerbiall ſentence, containing many notable exhortations, and arguments to the ſtudie and practiſe of that wiſedome, which is contained in this booke, laid downe in the firſt nine Chapters. Secondly, the prouerbiall ſayings themſelues, from the beginning of the tenth, to the end of the booke.

In this preſent verſe is propoſed the principall propoſition, and ſumme of theſe nine Chapters, that is, *the feare of the Lord*, a reuerent awe of his Maieſtie, proceeding from faith,

wherby through the feeling of his loue, as well as the weight of his displeasure, we are afraid to offend him, true pietie and godlinesse (for it is a part for the whole worship of God, whereof it is a principall part, and as it were the custos and keeper of the rest in their duties, all euill being committed where it is wanting) *is the beginning* or head *of knowledge*, the foundation and top, the entrance, proceeding, and perfection of wisedome.

In the latter part of the verse, hee meeteth with an obiection, which is made in this manner: As much as you praise this wisdome, who regardeth it? is it not despised of the most part, and reiected euery where? True (saith he) but what are they which contemne it? *fooles*, meaning all wicked men. And therefore it is no matter what account they make of it, vnlesse they were wiser. The opposition then of this sentence standeth thus: *The feare of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*, and wise men will embrace it: but how excellent soeuer *wisedome* and instruction is, *fooles will* haue it in no estimation, but set light by it, and despise it.

Verse 8. *My sonne heare thy fathers instruction, and forsake not thy mothers teaching.*

Verse 9. *For they shall be a comely ornament vnto thy head, and as chaines for thy necke.*

TRue wisedome hauing been before described, and the feare of God commended, he adioyneth an exhortation to embrace the same, by making vse of the meanes thereof: where we haue to obserue { First, a precept, vers 8. / Secondly, a promise, vers. 9.

In the precept are to be vnderstood, the subiects of it, the persons to whom it is directed, euery faithfull reader, and therefore hee speaketh to all, as if it were one man, and that out of pure loue, euen as a father to his beloued childe: and because hee should hearken to him, as a louing childe to his father, he calleth him his sonne.

In the next place the matter of the precept is to be noted, that

that he heare the doctrine, whereby this wisedome is offered, called *instruction*, and *teaching*, which hee commendeth by the efficient instrumentall, to wit, his parents, which should incite him, to be attentiue to both, and contemptuous to neither.

The promise is laid downe in an eligant similitude, suiting with the capacitie and affections of children, to whom hee speaketh, that *they*, namely *instruction and teaching*, heard, and not forsaken, *shall be a comely ornament*, in Hebrew, an *increase of grace to thy head, and as chaines for thy necke*, they shal so garnish and decke thee, that if a crowne of gold were set vpon thy head, and a chaine of pearles were put about thy necke, thou couldest not be more adorned, and beautified before God, and men.

Verse 10. *My sonne, if sinners doe intice thee, consent thou not.*

THis verse, and the nine next following, containe an excellent caueat, to take heed of, and auoid those meanes, which make the instructions of parents, or other gouernours, fruitlesse, and of none effect, namely, pernicious, and pestilent inticements. This matter he doth here propound in generall, and more particularly amplifie afterwards, in that which followeth.

In the generall he forewarneth his *sonne*, that is, euery godly man, and such as addict themselues to wisedome and vertue, to beware of seducers, shewing both what manner of persons they are, to wit, *sinners*, and how to be auoided, by not consenting vnto them, or giuing the least eare, or liking to their flatteries and deceitfull perswasions.

Verse 11. *If they say, Come with vs, we will lay wait for blood, and lie prinily for the innocent without peril.*

HEre followeth the particular handling of the former matter, in this verse, and diuers of the rest that follow:

wherein are set downe, first the inticing speeches of sinners, as it were motiues to winne consent, and afterwards the wholesome dissuasion of the holy Ghost as a retentiue to hold them backe from yeelding. In both which we haue the counsell, or that whereunto they doe moue vs, and the seuerall reasons whereupon the same is grounded. The motiues of the wicked, are to worke mischiefe, and to practise crueltie by cunning: which the spirit of God setteth downe according to their meaning, in odious termes, such as their owne lippes would not so apertly vtter, and especially at the first: for it were enough to fright and discourage one, yet not fleshed in sinne, to heare such words: *Let vs lay waite for blood*, vndoe men, either by taking away their liues, or hurting, if not vtterly ouerthrowing their estates, which is their purpose, but not alway their pretence; *and lie priuilie*, like hunters for beasts, and fowlers for birds, or theeues by the waies side, and enemies in ambushment, dissemble, and conceale our malicious, trecherous, and hurtful plots, vntill we haue aduantage: *for the innocent*, whom God iustifieth, and approueth of, and who haue deserued no such intreatie at the hands of their oppressors, whom clamorous tongues notwithstanding spare not to deprane, as if they were culpable of hainous offences: *without peril*: for so doe the learned take the word here vsed, in some other place, as Iob. 9. 17. *Hee destroyeth me with a tempest, and woundeth me without danger*.

And hauing hitherto declared both the matter, and manner of their allurements, he now beginneth to relate their arguments, whereby they goe about to inueigle the simple: and this first from the safetie of the attempt, that they may take it in hand, and proceed in it freely, and without feare of punishment, which is brought in the beginning, and placed in the fore-front, to animate them against all dread and discouragements at the onset.

Verse

Verſe 12. *Wee will ſwallow them vp aliue, like a graue, euen whole like thoſe that goe downe into the pit:*

NOw followeth the ſecond reaſon of theſe tempters, drawne from the facilitie and eaſineſſe of their exploits, to preuent the doubts that might ariſe againſt their proceedings, for the difficultie of their attempts, and the doubtfulnes of their ſucceſſe: becauſe that many that could bee content to doe any euill, which may bring good to themſelues, or hurt to the innocent, yet for feare of foile, repulſe, or euill ſucceſſe, are the more vnwillingly drawne vnto it. Now therefore inticers euermore take away this ſcruple, and make the ſimple beleeue that they can effect it without any trouble. They are able with much eaſe, and as little reſiſtance, to ouercome and pray vpon the liuing, whom they take in hand to vndoe, as the graue doth receiue and conſume the dead corpſes, that are buried in it.

Verſe 13. *We ſhall finde all precious riches, and fill our houſes with ſpoile.*

THis verſe containeth their third reaſon, which is taken from the commodity that they ſhal get by their attempt, not pelfe, nor trumperie, not trifles of no value, but riches of all ſorts, and thoſe that are precious, and in abundance, wherewith they ſhall ſtore their houſes, as conquerours doe, when they haue the ſacking of cities, and carrie away the pray.

Verſe 14. *Thou ſhalt caſt in thy lot among vs: wee will all haue one purſe.*

HEre is an obiection preuented, which the partie tempted may thinke or ſay: that he ſhall take as much paines as others, but finde leſſe gaines, ſeeing it is to be feared, that you being maſters in this trade, and captaines in miſchiefe, will challenge the moſt vnto your ſelues, and being many, and of

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an old confederacie, will make my part the leaſt. Anſw. Yea the bootie ſhall be diuided moſt equally, and then according to the faſhion of Merchants, wee will caſt lots to determine each mans part, (and that which is more) thou ſhalt in the meane time haue money of vs if thou wanteſt, to defray thy charges: thou ſhalt liue of our purſe, and wee in the like caſe, will of thine, we will haue a common bagge among vs.

Verſ. 15. *My ſonne, walke not in the way with them: refraine thy foote from their path.*

NOw are we come to the retentiue, or diſſwaſion whereby the ſpirit of God withholdeth his children from conſenting to the cunning inticements of ſinfull ſeducers, which he firſt beginneth with a dehortation, and then confirmeth with arguments.

The dehortation is vſed in this verſe, as an antidote, or counterpoyſon againſt their virulent tongues, directly oppoſite to their counſell or call. *Come (ſay they)* and goe with vs: *my ſonne* (ſaith hee) *walke not in the way with them*, conuerſe not with ſuch in friendſhip, renounce their acquaintance, and haue little to doe with them: *refraine thy foote from their path*, be not where they haunt, or are, if thou canſt chuſe.

Verſe 16. *For with their feete they runne to euill, and make haſte to ſhed blood.*

THe deceiuers come armed with guilefull ſhewes of reaſon, like ſwords, and offenſiue weapons to wound mens conſciences, by drawing them into miſchiefe, and therefore the holy Ghoſt offereth vs ſubſtantiall and forcible arguments like ſhields and defenſiue weapons to reſiſt them: whereof wee haue one here taken from their hurtfull cruell diſpoſition, which appeareth by their effects, *the doing of euill, and the ſheding of blood*, eſpecially by the manner thereof, in that they runne and make ſuch haſte thereunto. And this is aſſumed out of their owne words in the eleuenth verſe.

Verſe

Verſe 17. *For in vaine is their net ſpred before the eyes of all that hath wing.*

AS before he aduiſeth the godly to be cautelous and not yeelding to the inticements of thoſe wicked tempters, becauſe all their waies tend to the doing of hurt: ſo here hee diſſwadeth them by another argument, from the vncertaine euent of their attempts, contradicting their bragges and abſolute promiſes which they made to themſelues of proſperous ſucceſſe, in the twelfth and thirteenth verſes, and this he doth by a ſimilitude: although they bee as confident of ſpeeding well, as if they had gotten the pray alreadie, yet can they no more aſſuredly ſay that their counſels and purpoſes ſhall take effect, then an vnskilfull fowler (which laieth his grinnes and ſnares openly) can certainly affirme, that hee will catch the birds that are flying in the aire, and obſerue where his nets are laid to ſhunne them.

Verſe 18. *Moreouer, they lay waite for their owne blood, and lie priuilie for their owne liues.*

TO the former two reaſons, he addeth in theſe words, a third from the danger and perill of their plots, that the greateſt hurt is like to redound to themſelues: they would ſhed blood, and ſo they ſhall, but it is their owne. They vſe al their art to take away life, and make a ſlaughter, and that they ſhall doe, but they are the men to bee killed, themſelues muſt be ſlaine. And where then is the ſafetie which they ſo much preſumed of, and gaue warrant for, with ſuch confidence?

Verſe 19. *Such are the waies of euery one that is giuen to gaine; it will take away the life of the poſſeſſers of it.*

NOw are we come to the concluſion of this point, wherein all that hath been ſpoken thereto, is knit vp ſententiouſly, with a rhetoricall acclamation, and applied to more then

then robbers, and purſe-takers, or groſſe murtherers: for, ſaith he, *ſuch are the waies of euery one that is giuen to gaine:* ſo ſtandeth the caſe both for practiſe of crueltie, if occaſion be offered, and perill of ſelfe-hurting, with all that are too greedie of getting commoditie. It is the gaine or commoditie that is deſired with a couetous minde, or compaſſed with an vnrighteous hand, *it will take away the life of the poſſeſſers of it*, bring deſtruction at laſt of ſoule or body vpon them that ſo vnrighteouſly hunt after it.

Verſe 20. *Wiſedome crieth without, ſhe putteth foorth her voyce in the ſtreetes:*

Verſe 21. *She calleth on the top of the aſſemblies, ſhe vttereth her voyce at the entring of the gates ſhe ſpeaketh her words in the citie, ſaying.*

BEfore was ſhewed the counſell which the holy Ghoſt giueth to preuent ſinne, and to detaine men from the practiſe of it: and here is offered a direction to them that haue ſinned, (as all men haue in euery place) that they may be reclaimed from it. And this is ſet foorth firſt by the author, ſecondly by the meane, thirdly by the matter.

The author is *Wiſedome* or *wiſedomes*, the moſt high and excellent wiſedome *Ieſus Chriſt*, the eternall wiſedome of God, in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſedome and knowledge, Col. 2. 3. who taketh vpon him here, and in certaine other chapters of this booke, the perſon of a Matrone, a Ladie, or Princeſſe, according to the feminine gender, whereof the word that ſignifieth wiſedome is in Hebrew. The manner of giuing this aduice and direction appeareth in many words, as, *ſhe crieth*, vſeth earneſtnes, *without*, abroad and openly, *ſhe putteth foorth her voyce in the ſtreetes*, ſhe ſpeaketh freely, and plainly, and diſtinctly, in places moſt frequented, *ſhe calleth in the top of the aſſemblies*, as it were out of an high place, as they vſed to doe which were to make Orations, or ſpeeches to a great auditory or multitude, *ſhe vttereth her voyce at the entring of the gates*, whither people were wont to repaire for matters

matters of iuſtice and iudgement, Gen.34.20.Ruth.4.1. *And vttereth her voyce in the citie*, ſpeaketh audibly and ſenſible in euery place and quarter of the citie. All tendeth to this, that ſhe ſeeketh opportunitie euery where to doe good in euery place, in fields, townes, iudgement places, market places, publikely, and priuatly, and by all endeuours.

The matter is contained in the two next verſes.

Verſe 22. *O ye ſimple ones, how long will ye loue ſimplicitie, and ſcorners delight in ſcorning, and fooles hate knowledge?*

HEre beginneth the matter of Wiſedomes ſpeech and direction, which conſiſteth of an expoſtulation in this verſe, and of an exhortation in the next.

In the expoſtulation note { First the perſons with whom ſhe dealeth. / Secondly the faults for which ſhe blameth them.

Of perſons three ſorts are reprehended: the firſt are the *ſimple*, ſuch as are void of ſound iudgement and vnderſtanding, and therefore readie and eaſie to bee peruerted, as it is ſaid in another place, *The ſimple beleeueth euery thing*. Prou.14.15.

The ſecond are *ſcorners*, ſuch as being ſet to doe euill, refuſe, deride, and diſdaine all meanes vſed to reclaime them.

The third are *fooles*, who are poyſoned with peſtilent opinions, and corrupted with wicked courſes of life and behauiour.

The faults wherewith ſhe obbraideth them, are the habites of euill in them, as of *ſimplicitie* in the ſimple: of *ſcorning* in the ſcorners: of *fooliſhnes* in the fooles, whereof ſhe conuinceth them by two arguments: one, that they are obſtinate, and perſiſt in them, which is intended in *how long?* the other, that their hearts and affections were poſſeſſed with them, in that they *loued* the ſame, and *delighted* therein, and *hated* to be cured of them.

Verſe

Verſe 23. *Turne you at my correction, behold I will powre out my ſpirit vnto you, and make you vnderſtand my words.*

WIſedome hauing ſearched into their ſore, and diſcouered the ſame vnto them, doth now apply a plaiſter which may heale it: and after a ſharp rebuke for their former follie and contempt, ſhe preſcribeth remedie for the time to come, by faithful counſell, with an exhortation: wherein may be obſerued, { First the dutie that is to be performed. Secondly, the motiues that ſhould induce them to it.

The dutie to be performed is repentance and reformation, which ſhe calleth turning, by a ſimilitude taken either from trauellers, that haue gone the wrong way, and muſt come back againe, or from ſeruants, or children, or ſouldiers, which haue run away from their gouernours, and ſo vndone themſelues.

The motiues are two: the former is from that ſharpnes which the Lord had vſed toward them, either by rebukes or chaſtiſements: and the latter from that kindneſſe which hee would ſhew vnto them, the promiſe whereof is noted with the word of obſeruation, *Behold*, as intending a thing admirable and worthie to be looked vpon of all: and ſo indeed are the things promiſed, the effects of his kindnes, as namely hee would beſtow his *ſpirit* vpon them, and gifts and graces of the holy Ghoſt, and that not ſparingly and in a ſmall quantitie, but plentifully, and in great abundance, as rich fountaines cauſe their waters to boyle out; (for ſo doth the word ſignifie) and more particularly hee promiſeth to illuminate their minde, with the ſauing knowledge of his holie will, which is the worke and fruite of the ſpirit, that ſhall be powred vpon them.

Verſe 24. *For as much as I call, but yee refuſe, I ſtretch out mine hand, but none regardeth:*

Verſe

Verſe 25. *But ye deſpiſe all my counſell, and will none of my correction.*

HItherto Wiſedome hath perſwaded wicked men to repentance, by expoſtulations, exhortations, and promiſes: now ſhe declareth the miſerable eſtate of wilfull perſons, with comminations, menaces, and threatnings.

The iudgement that ſhe denounceth againſt them, is no leſſe then deſtruction it ſelfe, which is ſhewed by the cauſe of it, in theſe two verſes, and by the grieuouſnes of it, in the three next.

The cauſe is obſtinacie and peruerſenes, whereof ſhe conuinceth them, partly by her benignitie and kinde dealing towards them, and partly by their ingratitude, and contemptuous behauiour towards her: *ſhe calleth them* by way of inuitement, to be partakers of her graces: *ſhe ſtretcheth out her hands* vnto them: *but they refuſed* to hearken and yeeld obedience to her voyce: *none of them regarded* the teſtimonies and tokens of her fauour: *they deſpiſed*, ſet naught by and derided *her counſell*, thoſe wholeſome precepts and admonitions which ſhe gaue vnto them, *and would none of her corrections*, they were wearie of her rebukes and chaſtiſements, but not amended by them.

Verſe 26. *I will alſo laugh at your calamitie, and mocke when your feare commeth.*

Verſe 27. *When your feare commeth like an horrible deſolation, and your deſtruction approcheth as a whirle-winde: when affliction and anguiſh ſhall come vpon you:*

Verſe 28. *Then they ſhall call vpon me, but I will not heare, they ſhall ſeeke me earely, but they ſhall not finde me.*

THe cauſe of their miſerie hauing been expreſſed in the premiſſes, the grieuouſnes thereof is in theſe words deſcribed: as firſt that they ſhall be comfortleſſe, and helpleſſe, the Lord ſhewing himſelfe righteouſly vnmercifull to them in *laughing at them and ſcorning them*: not that there is in the

the Lord any disposition of laughter, or *scorning*, but for mans capacitie he is often in the Scriptures resembled to men with humane affections: as here, because he will not care for them, but cast them off, he is said to deride them; for that it is a miserie not to be relieued in miserie, but a double corsie and woe to be iested at of those who onely can helpe them.

Secondly, the manner of the plague amplified with so many words and similies, doth proue it to bee grieuous: as, because it will be terrible, and make them sore afraid, it is called by the name of *feare*, and it is said to *come like an horrible desolation*: the word properly signifieth a furious breach of any thing, breaking and ouerthrowing whatsoeuer it meeteth with: and it is compared to a *whirle-winde*, which commeth suddenly and with great violence, not onely blowing vp dust, and chaffe, and light matter, but blowing downe oftentimes trees, and houses, and strong buildings.

Thirdly, the effects which it will worke shall giue testimonie sufficient of the sharpnes of Gods proceedings against them: for that their hearts shall be filled with affliction, and anguish, and their tongues shall be compelled through extremitie of torment and danger to crie to him, whom they haue contemned, but to no purpose, and without successe: for he will *not answere* them, that is, grant their requests, but will testifie his wrath, and increase their sorrow, by denying the things they pray for: yea the greatnes of their distresse shall inforce them to seeke him earely, very diligently and carefully, they shall spare no paines, they shall breake their sleepes in the morning, and *yet shall not finde him* gracious and mercifull to them in their griefes and perplexities.

Verse 29. *Because they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the feare of the Lord.*

Verse 30. *They would none of my counsell, but despised all my corrections.*

HE insisteth still vpon the point in hand, and iustifieth his accusation, by repetition of those sinnes which would

cauſe them to bee ſo fearefully plagued. And in reckoning them vp, he beginneth with that wherewith hee ended in the expoſtulation, *their hatred of knowledge*: and whereas he vpbraided them with refuſall of wiſdomes gratious offers, and that they regarded them not, heemaketh it good by this, that they *choſe not the feare of the Lord*, they would not learne to be religious and godly, when meanes and opportunities were miniſtred vnto them. And before it was ſaid vnto them, *ye haue deſpiſed all my counſell, and would none of my correction*; here it is ſaid of them, *they would none of my counſell, but haue deſpiſed all my correction*; the ſenſe is the ſame though the words be ſomewhat varied.

Verſ. 31. *Therefore ſhall they eate of the fruit of their owne, and be filled with their owne deuices.*

THe former two verſes contained a rehearſall of the complaint, and this a renewing of the threatning, wherein he declareth their deſtruction to bee iuſt, and according to their owne deſerts, by a ſimilitude in this manner: euen as it is equall that planters or plowmen ſhould eate of the fruit or graine which they haue nouriſhed or ſowne, and laboured for, eſpecially if they haue encreaſed much fruit, or ſowne much corne, or taken much paines, that then they ſhould bee partakers of the labours of their hands more plentifully: ſo ſtandeth it with the righteouſneſſe of God to giue to theſe that *they may eate of the fruit of their owne way*, that is, taſte of that ſorrow and confuſion which their diſſolute liues and froward hearts doe duly demerit. *And bee filled with their owne deuices*; albeit they could neuer make an end of inuenting and practiſing that which is euill, yet they ſhall bee ſated at laſt, and ſurcharged with the effects therof. Such fulnes of ſhame, griefe, deſperation, and all manner of torment, that they ſhall feele themſelues ouerburthened therewith, as is the ſtomacke, when it is oppreſſed with too much meate, and made ſicke by a ſurfeit.

Verſ. 32. *For the turning away of the ſimple ſlaieth them: and the proſperitie of fooles deſtroyeth them.*

THe former part of this verſe is annexed to the premiſſes, both as an explication and confirmation of the ſame: for what are the *waies* which *ſimple* ones (that is, ſuch as haue not diſcretion to get knowledge, when it is offered) *ſhall eate the fruite of their turning away*, their wilfull refuſall of wiſedomes inſtructions, which they will neither learne, nor obey, nor with any liking ſo much as looke towards: and what are the fruites which ſuch ſinfull waies doe cauſe thoſe ſimple idiots to eate of? death and damnation: *they ſlay them*: if they bring not violence vpon their bodies, yet they bring both body and ſoule to perdition for euer. The latter part preuenteth an obiection that might be made, and often is, againſt this and the former ſentences of wiſedome: Doth contemptuous turning away ſlay the ſimple? and doe deſpiſers eate the fruites of their owne waies? how commeth it to paſſe then, that of all others they commonly thriue beſt, and few are found ſo proſperous, and in ſo good eſtate as they? The anſwere is made that *the proſperitie of fooles ſhall deſtroy them*, both in haſtning their iudgements, and making it the more grieuous: and ſo ſtoppeth not, but furthereth the executions of wiſedomes threatnings.

Verſ. 33. *But he that obeyeth me ſhall dwell ſafely from feare of euill.*

LAſtly, this point is amplified, and ſo ſhut vp by the contrary, namely the behauiour and condition of the godly, altogether oppoſite to that of the ſimple ones, ſcorners, and fooles, formerly deſcribed: for theſe here commended, deſpiſe not wiſedome, nor turne away from her, but hearken attentiuely, and yeeld obedience vnto her: and therefore they liue not in danger of death, of plagues and puniſhments, but *dwell ſafely*, are out of perill of deſtruction, or of any hurt, though

though not exempted from all crosses and sufferings, and bee *quiet from feare of euill*, not onely no euill it selfe, such as would be noisome and pernicious, shall affray them, but not so much as a suspition and dread of it shall goe to his heart, to dismay him. Yet because no man can perfectly obey wisedome in all things, the best in their infirmities are sometimes perplexed and troubled with doubts, but neuer subdued, or vtterly discouraged by them. See chap. 10. vers. 9.

CHAPTER. II.

Verse 1. *My sonne, if thou wilt receiue my words, and hide my commandements with thee.*

THe wisedome and spirit of God hauing denounced most fearfull and vnauoidable iudgements against obstinate cõtemners, doth leaue them, and commeth now to teach and incourage such as will be tractable: whom in this chapter hee assisteth partly by precepts, prescribing the duties which they are to performe, and partly by promises, assuring them of the good successe, which they shall not faile to finde. The duties are set downe generally in this first verse, and more particularly in three next following.

The generall dutie is to giue due intertainment to Gods holy messages first by *receiuing his words*, not onely to heare them when they are graciously tendered, but gladly and willingly embrace them with vnderstanding, and so to be affected and moued in heart with the power of them, as to desire and endeuour to obey them, and then *by hiding his commandements* to keepe them carefully being receiued, which is expressed and made lightsome by a comparison taken from the charinesse of men, in preseruing of their money, their iewels, or any other thing that is precious vnto them: for such things they vse to lay vp safely, and keepe them vnder locke and key, that they be not robbed and beguiled of them.

Verſe 2. *And cauſe thine eares to hearken to wiſdom, and incline thine heart to vnderſtanding.*

THe particular duties are the exerciſe of theſe meanes, whereby knowledge and grace is obtained: which being foure in number, two are contained in this verſe, and in the third, and the laſt in the fourth. The former of the two is the attention of the eare, not hearing onely but hearkening, and diligent heed taking, to that which is ſpoken, making the eare to attend and hearken. The latter in place, though firſt in order, is the deſire of the ſoule, which metaphorically, and by a compariſon from corporall ſubſtances, hee calleth the bowing of the heart, the inforcing of it by the helpe of the ſpirit, to be religiouſly affected at Gods ſacred ordinances.

Verſe 3. *Yea if thou calleſt for wiſdome, and lifteſt vp thy voyce for vnderſtanding.*

TO the two former duties, he conditioneth with them to adioyne a third, if they would auaile to get grace, and that is prayer; the manner whereof is preſcribed in the words of *crying and lifting vp of voyce*, importing the feruency of it, that it ought to be ardent and earneſt.

Verſe 4. *If thou ſeeke her as ſiluer, and ſearch for her, as for hid treaſures.*

THe fourth meanes is here laſtly preſcribed, that ſtudy and induſtry be vſed, by reading, hearing, conferring, and meditating, &c. And this is ſet forth by a compariſon, *as men dig for ſiluer*, euen with as much paines, great coſt, earneſt affection, and conſtant continuance therein till we haue found it, euen as the worldly man doth for ſiluer or gold, or any treaſure which is hid in ſome cloſe, ſtrong and ſecret place, as in the ground or within a wall, whether men cannot come, but by toile and great labour: and yet not impoſſible to bee compaſſed by paines taking.

Verſe

Verſe 5. *Then ſhalt thou vnderſtand the feare of the Lord, and finde the knowledge of God.*

AFter the preceps and inſtructions, followeth the promiſe of good ſucceſſe to euery one which is tractable to obſerue theſe conditions propoſed, *he ſhall vnderſtand the feare of the Lord*, his heart and conſcience ſhall experimentally bee acquainted with true piety and religion, and ſoundly alſo ſeaſoned with an holy illumination, and made iudicious in the ſcriptures, and doctrines of faith: ſo that he ſhall be well able to diſcerne betweene light and darknes: betweene truth and errors, in meaſure competent for his ſaluation.

Verſe 6. *For the Lord giueth wiſdome, out of his mouth commeth knowledge and vnderſtanding.*

THeſe words are added for a double vſe, as well to be a confirmation of the promiſe, as an amplification of that excellent gift which is promiſed, and they aptly ſerue for both. For (touching the former) how ſhould they which in due manner ſeeke wiſdome miſſe of it, ſeeing that he which incourageth them to labour for it with aſſurance of obtaining it, is he which hath the diſpoſing of it, and that is *Iehouah* himſelfe, the eternall, vnchangeable, and alſufficient, who can eaſily worke it with a word, as the manner deſcribed importeth, *out of his mouth commeth vnderſtanding*. That is by his bleſſing, it being in a borrowed ſpeech aſcribed to God, which properly belongeth to man, who commonly make their promiſes and appointments by the words of their mouthes: in like manner (though the Lord being a ſpirit hath no vſe of mouth, or other corporall members, and being omnipotent, his will carrieth power enough, without the helpe of words) yet for our weake capacity that which he effectually worketh, is imputed to the force of his words, as Mat. 4. 4. *Man ſhall not liue by bread only, but by euery word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* Lam. 3. 38. *Out of the mouth of*

the most high proceedeth not euill and good? Ionah 2.10. *And the Lord spake vnto the fish, and it cast vp Ionah vpon the drie land.* And touching the latter, namely the amplification, whosoeuer shal heedfully attend to the purpose of the holy Ghost, may euidently perceiue that wisedome is in this verse, and the two next extolled and set forth by the cause, the glorious and bountifull author thereof; and in the rest that follow, is commended by the effects, the singular and admirable fruites of it. The author wee see is the Lord *Iehouah*, the onely originall, perfect, absolute, and eternall being, and that out of his most gracious mouth it proceedeth.

Verse 7. *He hath laid vp true substance for the righteous: he is a shield to them that walke vprightly.*

Verse 8. *That they may keepe the paths of equitie: and hee preserueth the way of his Saints.*

HAuing had occasion to speake of Gods beneficence, in bestowing that diuine and celestiall gift of wisedome, he proceedeth further to inlarge his praises, for the effects of his goodnesse, where may be noted:
1. The speciall fauours which hee sheweth.
2. To what manner of persons they doe belong.

The fauours here mentioned are, prouision and protection. The former whereof is set foorth by a similitude from prouident fathers, who take care for their children, and not onely maintaine them with foode, and other necessaries, while they are young, but carefully get, and lay vp to make them a stock, when they come to age: So, and better dealeth the Lord for his sonnes and daughters: for whereas men gather corruptible goods for theirs, which many times come to nothing, and they haue no vse of them, *hee hideth that which is a being* (as the word signifieth) for his: they shall be sure to enioy the benefit of it; the treasures of grace, ioy, and glorie, are safely reserued for them. The latter is of two sorts, the one corporall concerning the outward man, as safetie from bodily enemies,

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and externall dangers, which is alſo declared by a borrowed ſpeech, he being called a ſhield, that will intercept all noiſome ſtrokes, and practiſes, that none of them ſhall light vpon his people, to hurt them, though for their triall, humilitie, and other profitable vſes, they may be afflicted by them. The other is ſpirituall concerning the inward man, as ſafetie from ſinne, and Satan, and apoſtaſie, that notwithſtanding, by theſe enemies of the ſoule, they are in perill either to be miſled through craft, or to bee thruſt out of the right way, through violence, yet they ſhall *keepe the paths of equitie*; they ſhall perſeuere, and proceede in their vertuous courſes. And why? *For he preſerueth their way*, he doth as it were eſtabliſh and gard them in their weldoing by his grace, from the force and power of their owne corruptions, and the diuels temptations, and wicked mens euill counſels, and the worlds allurements, yea hee directeth, and by his prouidence proſpereth the purpoſes, words, actions, and the whole courſe of their liues. Now he deſcribeth thoſe, for whom this prouiſion is made, and to whom this protection pertaineth diuerſly: firſt from their truth and ſinceritie, calling them *righteous ones*. Secondly, from their holy conuerſation, that they *walke vprightly*. Thirdly, from their happie eſtate, that they are the *Saints of the Lord*: the deriuation of the Hebrew word importeth ſuch as to whom God ſheweth mercie, and ſo are made alſo godly, and merciſull. So much for the cauſe of wiſedome, now follow the effects.

Verſ. 9. *Then ſhalt thou vnderſtand righteouſnes, and iudgement, and equitie, and euery good path.*

THe effect of wiſedome, which hee here beginneth to intreate of, is the vigour and efficacie of it, whereby they are induced and made able to doe that which is good, as theſe words declare, and become circumſpect and cautious to ſhun that which is euill: as will appeare in the ſequell of that which followeth. *Then*, when thou haſt applied thine eares, & heart to wiſedome: when thou haſt called for vnderſtanding: when

thou haſt diligently ſought for it, and found it, the Lord beſtowing it vpon thee, then *ſhalt thou vnderſtand*, both know, & iudiciouſly exerciſe iuſtice, that which is lawful & right, and iudgement, prudence and good diſcretion, and equity, faithfull and plaine dealing, *and euery good path*, all good courſes of righteouſneſſe and religion. And that he meaneth a practicall knowledge, and not an intellectuall onely, it may bee ſeene by conference with other places; as chap. 8. v. 20. *I cauſe to walke in the way of righteouſnes, and in the middeſt of the paths of iudgement.* And in the firſt chapter, verſ. 3. *To receiue inſtruction, to doe wiſely by iuſtice, and iudgement, and equity.* See more there.

Verſ. 10. *When wiſedome entreth into thine heart, and knowledge delighteth thy ſoule.*

Verſ. 11. *Then ſhall counſell preſerue thee, and vnderſtanding ſhall keepe thee,*

Verſ. 12. *And deliuer thee from the euill way.*

HAuing in few words, but very ſignificant, expreſſed the force of wiſedom in conducting & inabling men to that which is good; he is now about to declare the vertues of it, for conſeruation againſt that which is euill: it is by a borrowed manner of ſpeech, or figure which we call *Proſopopeia*, compared to a watch or guard, ſuch as Princes and great men are wont to haue about them for the ſafety of their perſons; and therefore it is ſemblably ſaid in the eleuenth verſe, (containing the ſumme of all) that *counſell ſhall preſerue thee, and vnderſtanding ſhall keepe them*; their ſoules ſhall be as ſafe by the power thereof, as the bodies of thoſe which haue a band of armed men to waite vpon them. Heereunto in the tenth verſe he maketh a paſſage, by teaching him that would receiue defence from wiſedome, how he muſt be prepared for it: and afterwards in the twelfth, and thoſe that follow, hee ſpecifieth the principall hurtfull things from which hee ſhall bee protected. In the preparation are two things required; firſt, that *Wiſedome* come not into the head only, ſo as it be vnderſtood, or may be diſcourſed of; but *into the heart*, to ſeaſon the conſcience

ſcience, and that it be ſingularly loued, which wil produce this effect, that *knowledge ſhall delight the ſoule*, be pleaſant vnto it, as beautifull ſights are to the eyes, according to the proper ſignification of the word; or as meate and drinke are to the hungry and thirſtie, or any thing which we reliſh well, in which ſenſe the word is alſo ſomtimes vſed, as Prou. 9. 17. *His bread is pleaſant, &c.* The hurtfull things from which wiſedome will defend a man, are of two ſorts; ſome are reall, or actuall, as *the euill way*, wicked behauiour, ſinfull attempts, exorbitant courſes: ſome are perſonall, as meanes and cauſes of the former, and theſe mentioned in the latter ſtreame of the twelfth verſe, and more fully in thoſe that next enſue it.

Verſ. 12. *And from the man that ſpeaketh peruerſe things.*

SAlomon hath ſhewed the actuall euill, the wicked courſe of life, from which the louers of wiſedome ſhall bee ſhielded. And now hee proceedeth to promiſe them ſafety alſo from the meanes thereof, ſuch peſtilent perſons as vſe to entice and corrupt others:

and theſe are { 1. Diſſolute men. 2. Whoriſh women.

Both which hee deſcribeth at large, firſt the men, and them by ſundry effects, wherof each one as it were by ſteps ſurmounteth an other: the firſt is their ſpeech, that they *ſpeake peruerſe things*, tending to the diſhonour of God, and the peruerting of men, as the root and originall of the word importeth.

Verſ. 13. *And from them that leaue the paths of righteouſneſſe, to walke in the paths of darkeneſſe.*

THe ſecond effect of wicked men is their behauiour, and deeds; (for ill ſpeaking is euer accompanied with ill doing) and theſe are ſet forth by an oppoſition, or compariſon of contraries, whereby their courſe of life is made more odious; and therefore it is ſaid, that *they forſake the paths of righteouſnes*,

teousneſſe, which are alſo the pathes of light, *to walke in the pathes of darkeneſſe*, which are the waies of ignorance and iniquity; as if he ſhould haue ſaid, they turne from the right way of knowledge and obedience, which leadeth to ſaluation, and trauell in the waies of ſinne towards deſtruction: and their fault herein is ſo much the fouller, in that they goe not aſtray by meere error, or infirmity of their nature, as if they could not learne, or neuer were directed to a better way; but againſt their knowledge, and contrary to the light, they wilfully ſhun that good courſe which is approued of God, and conforme themſelues to the will of Satan, and practiſe that which they would neuer haue examined by the rule of the word: for the ſhine thereof would diſcouer the hideouſneſſe of it, and make it appeare to be odious and lothſome.

Verſ. 14. *Which reioyce in doing euill, and delight in wicked frowardneſſe.*

THe third property and effect of theſe wicked men, is the diſorder of their affections, whereby they aggrauate and much encreaſe the naughtineſſe of their words and actions: for they not onely *doe euill*, but reioyce therein: they come to it with deſire, they practiſe it with pleaſure, and afterwards are glad of their helliſh exploits; yea they exult, as the other word ſignifieth, they expreſſe that delight which they haue taken in ſatisfying their luſts, either by geſture, or countenance, or vaunting, or by ſome meanes or other, and many of them glory moſt of that, whereof they ought to bee moſt aſhamed, as *in wicked frowardneſſe*; the word is *peruerſeneſſe of euill*, ſinfull headineſſe in their licentious attempts whatſoeuer.

Verſ. 15. *Whoſe waies are peruerſe, and they are obſtinate in their pathes.*

THe laſt effect and property of the ſinful miſcreants, is their deſperate incorrigibleneſſe, that albeit their waies bee peruerſe, and all their courſe and carriage bee leaud and damnable,

nable, yet they are refractarie in them, and reſolued neuer to amend, but grow werſe like reſty iades, that are ſtill going backwards, when they ſhould proceed in a iourney. Neither will they hearken to him that ſhall teach them by precept, nor yet be willing to follow him that ſhall lead them by example, but are euery way ſo auerſe and froward, that their Miniſter or beſt friends can haue no hope or heart to deale any further with them, but may leaue them with a ſigh as men incurable; as the Phyſitian doth him that hath the pangs of death vpon him, or the Surgeon ſuch a one as is thruſt thorow the heart. They are the ſame whom in the former chapter hee calleth ſcorners, which would none of wiſedomes counſell, but deſpiſed her correction, &c.

Verſ. 16. *It ſhall deliuer thee from the ſtrange woman, from the ſtranger that flattereth with her words.*

NOw followeth the ſecond ſort of perillous perſons, from which, wiſedome will defend the men that loue her: ſhe will deliuer them from the euill woman, from the adultereſſe, and all her enticements, with the fruit and end thereof. And here ſhe is deſcribed by her { 1. Qualities. 2. Effects.

Her qualities are, firſt, that ſhe is a ſtrange woman, one with whom thou oughteſt to haue nothing to doe: for ſtrange ſtandeth in oppoſition to a mans lawfull wife; all others in that ſenſe are ſtrangers. So, other fire then that which God ſent downe from heauen vpon the altar, and was there continually nouriſhed, was called ſtrange fire; then ſhe is ſaid to be a ſtranger, to be reputed as a forreiner, that hath alienated her ſelfe from God and his people, by her filthy conuerſation. As therefore the Iſraelites might not marrie with women that were aliens, as being the daughters of ſtrange gods; no more ought a member of Chriſt to haue company with an harlot, as being as it were of another nation, not ſanctified to the Lord;

yea

yea being distant from him by birth, as far as the earth is from heauen. Her

effects are { Her leaud and sinfull behauiour. / The woe and misery whereunto shee bringeth her companions.

Some part of her misbehauiour is mentioned in this verse, as her smooth and flattering speech, whereby she laboureth to allure vnwarie and heedlesse persons, and them with a baite to bring into her net.

Vers. 17. *Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the couenant of her God.*

HEre haue we declared vnto vs the effects of this strange woman, her disloyaltie and perfidious behauiour, both against her husband and the Lord. *She forsaketh* her husband both in affection and action, though not perhaps in bodily presence, as *Potiphars* wife, and the harlot mentioned hereafter in the seuenth chapter had not: neither do all, nor the most, but few of them vtterly refuse their husbands bed; notwithstanding she liue and lie with him, yet she is said to relinquish him, if she keepe not her selfe to him onely, and hee enioy her wholly. Now to aggrauate the hainousnesse of the offence, *Salomon* describeth the husband so wronged, by his office and authority, and giueth the title of guide, adding withall a circumstance to make the fault appeare the fouler, that hee *is the guide of her youth*; euen he whom she first loued, to whom shee first gaue her heart, and hand, and whom God had appointed to her as an head and gouernour, euen when shee was young and had most need of direction. Then her sinne against God is set out, in that she hath broken her faith plighted in the contract, and at the marriage, and so is periured, and that against the Lord, whose couenant this was; not onely for that he ordained marriage to be entred into by such bonds and conditions, but because it was ratified, sanctified, and established by his special presence, & with speciall inuocation vpon his name.

Vers. 18.

Verſ. 18. *Surely her houſe ſtendeth to death, and her pathes to the dead.*

THe woe and miſery whereunto the whoriſh woman doth bring her cuſtomers is now to be ſpoken of, and that is no leſſe then deſtruction it ſelfe: for *her houſe*, the filthineſſe and miſbehauiour in her houſe, with the firſt entrance into familiarity with her, *tendeth to death*; ſometimes of the body, and alwaies of the ſoule, and *her pathes*, her courſe and order of life will bring him that accompanieth her therein, vnto *the dead*, to the ſame eſtate and puniſhment with them, that haue formerly periſhed in the ſame ſinne.

Verſ. 19. *Whoſoeuer goe in to her, returne not againe, neither attaine they to the way of life.*

THe puniſhment of adultery is aggrauated by the certainty of it, and the vniuerſality in reſpect of the offenders, being all almoſt in a deſperate eſtate: and therfore he ſaith, *Whoſoeuer goe in vnto her, returne not againe*; none, of what eſtate or condition ſoeuer, that haue familiarity, and commit filthineſſe with her, eſcape without miſchiefe, and hardly euer come to repentance, or *attaine to the way of life*, reforme themſelues, and take a better courſe of life, that they might be ſaued. And ſo theſe words are for the preuention of that wonted obiection oppoſed againſt rebukes and threatnings for this ſinne, we will repent and helpe all. But who doth ſo (ſaith the holy Ghoſt) *none that goe in to her returne againe*, that is, very few: for it is an hyperbolicall, and comparatiue ſpeech; as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, there are none to ſpeake of, that reforme themſelues, in compariſon of the multitude of them which continue impenitent vnto death and are damned. This manner of ſpeaking is frequent in the Scriptures. *No man calleth for iuſtice, no man contendeth for the truth.* Eſa. 59.4. *There is none that calleth vpon thy name, neither that ſtirreth vp himſelfe to take hold of thee.* Eſa. 64.7. *I hearkened and heard, but none ſpake aright, no man repented him of his wickedneſſe, ſaying, What*

haue

knew I doue? euery one turneth to his race, as the horse rusheth into the battell. Ierem. 8. 9.

Vers. 20. *That thou maiest walke in the way of good men, and keepe the pathes of the iust.*

THe vertue of wisdome hath been commended, for the protection and defence which it yeeldeth against wicked waies, and sinfull people, which now he amplifieth by the contrary, shewing the benefit of it for direction to good waies, and the example and society of godly persons, as will bee the better perceiued, if thou looke backe to the twelfth and thirteenth verses, and annex this vnto them in this manner: *It shal deliuer thee from the euill way, and from the man that speaketh froward things, and from them that leaue the waies of righteousnesse, to walke in the waies of darkenesse: that thou maiest walke in the waies of good men, and keepe the waies of the righteous*; that is, bee conuersant with them, and conforme thy selfe to their honest and holy behauiour:

Vers. 21. *For the righteous shall dwell in earth, and the vpright shall remaine therein.*

Vers. 22. *But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be plucked out of it.*

HEre haue we the conclusion of the precedent discourse, confirming it first by the kindnesse of God, in way of promise vnto the good, and then by his contrary iudgements, in way of threatning vnto the euill. Touching the former, he saith, that *the iust shall dwell in the earth*, bee protected in time of perill, when others perish, and they and theirs shall be established, so long as is good for them, and enioy all such blessings of this life, as will doe them most good. *But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth*; the vengeance of God shall ouerturne their persons, estates, and posterities, as grasse is mown down, or weeds are plucked vp, or naughtie trees are rooted out. If any obiect that the godly commonly haue least part in the earth, and earthly blessings, and are soonest remoued, let him consider

consider that howsoeuer it seeme so, yet indeed it is nothing so. For while they liue here the whole earth is theirs, with the vse of it, howsoeuer the Lord seeth it good to put them to a spirituall diet, and keepeth them for surfeiting of excesse, the better to fit them for their heauenly inheritance: and when they are taken away by death, they be translated to immortalitie and glorie. Whereas the wicked enioy that little, or that much which they haue, as vsurpers and theeues doe an house, which they haue broken into and keepe for a few houres, vntil the officers come and apprehend them, and then are they cast into prison, or led vnto execution, they are ciected with a witnesse, and cast into perpetuall miserie.

CHAPTER. III.

Verse 1. *My sonne, forget not thou my law, but let thy heart keepe my commandements.*

IN this Chapter the spirit of God proceedeth to perswade his people to the conscionable obseruation, and keeping of his word, and that he doth { 1. By exhortations. 2. By reasons annexed seuerally thereunto.

And the most of these are promises, yea all of them to the seuen and twentieth verse, and so after the thirtieth; yet amplified by their contraries, as will appeare in their places.

The exhortations are of two sorts: one is generall, requiring an exact care of al Gods law: the others are more special, containing an vnfolded declaration of sundrie duties.

The first we haue in these first words, wherein we may consider, first, the persons to whom hee speaketh. Secondly, the counsell which he deliuereth.

The persons, are all faithfull readers, or hearers, to whom without partiality he directeth his speech, as if it were but one man

man, and he most deare vnto him, and therfore as afore, so now againe, and afterwards, he vseth the amiable name of a *sonne*; as if he should say, It is not an enemie that dealeth with thee, nor a bare friend, nor a master to his seruant, nor a King to his subiect, but a father to his childe: whether therefore thou look to God the author, he loueth thee tenderly that speaketh vnto thee, hearken therefore with attention, and obey. His counsell is vttered, first, in a prohibition, *forget not my law*, neither suffer my doctrine to slip out of thy memory, neither be vnmindfull to put it in practise: then by a precept, *but let thy heart keepe my commandements*, get sound knowledge of them, and embrace them with vprightnes, and good affection.

Verse 2. *For they shall adde vnto thee length of daies, and yeeres of life, and peace.*

THe generall precept for faithfull keeping of Gods commandements hath an ample promise annexed vnto it of a long life, and comfortable estate. *For they*, wisedomes law and precept remembred, and obeyed, *shall adde vnto thee length of daies*; he meaneth not that the termes, and times which the Lord hath set shall be lengthened, but as hee hath prefined a long life to any of his people, so hath he ordained it to be the reward of their obedience. *And peace*, welfare, and prosperity, so farre as is safe and good for thee, and corrupteth not thy heart with pride, vaine confidence, forgetfulnes of God, and death, and immoderate loue of the world. If any man except against these words as vntrue, or improbable, because many good men liue in trouble, and dye in their youth, let him consider that the obedience of the godly is not full, but in part, and therefore it is no marueile, if in part onely they are made partakers of outward things; and beside to adde that the promises touching outward things are not absolute, and simple, but conditionall, and the Lord giuing his children in heauen eternitie, and complete happinesse, doth verifie all his promises with aduantage. And it pleaseth him many waies respecting their good, to shorten the race of diuers whom he deare-

ly

ly loueth. Sometimes, leſt they ſhould bee corrupted in the world, as that ſeemeth to bee one cauſe why *Ieroboams* good ſonne was taken away ſo ſoone: Sometimes leſt they ſhould ſee the euils to come: and therefore that worthie *Ioſiah* was called to his reſt before the calamities that ſhortly after enſued. Sometimes the wicked world vnworthie of them and vnkind vnto them, is iuſtly puniſhed by hauing them taken away from them. And for all this, notwithſtanding they liue neuer ſo ſhort a time, yet haue they the *length of daies*, euery day being a whole day vnto them, the Sunne of comfort, and of Gods fauour ariſing vpon them early in the morning, and ſhining vpon them brighter and brighter without any going downe. Sommer fruite may be as ripe as the winter fruite, and yet gathered many weekes, or ſome moneths before it.

1.King.14.11. Iſai.57.1.2. Heb.11.3.8.

Verſe 3. *Let not mercie and truth forſake thee: binde them on thy necke, and write them vpon the table of thy heart.*

AFter the generall precept, he preſcribeth eſpeciall duties, yet ſuch as are of large extent, and containe vnder them very many particulars: for by *mercie* he meaneth all good offices towards man; and by *truth*, faith, or faithfulnes, he vnderſtandeth all good duties which wee owe to God. Which appeareth to bee ſo, becauſe theſe being propounded in this verſe are handled more at large in the chapter, the latter in the former place, and the former in the ſecond, after the manner of the Hebrewes. Now theſe graces he requireth as carefully to be kept, as prouidently gotten, admoniſhing that they *forſake vs not*, ſpeaking by an hypallagy, he giueth vs a caueat, that we forſake not them, and withall noteth how readie they are (through our corruption) to bee gone from vs. And the great difficultie of retaining them, and therefore in the next words he requireth that we ſhould *binde them to our necks*, that is, looke well to them, and keepe them ſafe, and tye them faſt, as men doe their chaines, or coſtly Iewels which they vſe for their delight, and ornaments: and withall to *write them on the table of our heart*, that is, alway to remember them, and

thinke on them, speake of them, and doe them, as we vse to set downe in our tables those things whereof we would keepe a precise memorandum.

Verse 4. *So shalt thou finde fauour, and good vnderstanding in the sight of God, and man.*

THe former precept hath this promise annexed vnto it for a reason: wherein two things are promised: the first is, that by obseruation of that holy aduice, or commandement, a man shall *finde*, that is, obtaine comfort, *fauour*, loue, liking, and good acceptation: the other is, he shall finde *good vnderstanding*, whereby is meant good successe, or any such blessings, whereby vnderstanding is rewarded: for heere is the cause put for the effect. And both these are said to bee *before God, and man*, that is, God will be gracious to such, and man will bee friendly. God will giue them the fruite, and recompence of their vnderstanding, and cause their good estate to testifie their wisedome, euen such as hee doth approoue of, and man shall be witnesse of the same. Where now may be seene how pertinently the promise performed doth answere to the precept obeyed. He that by the truth is seruiceable to God, and likewise by mercie is profitable to man, shall *finde fauour* and honour both with God, and man.

Verse 5. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and leane not to thine owne wisedome.*

HAuing in the precept last before, commended to vs the constant possession, or rather vs vnto the faithfull custodie of *mercie*, and thereby all righteousnes required in the second table, and *truth*, the quintessence of the first, he beginneth with the latter, declaring certaine particuler duties, and benefits of pietie, to the seuen and twentieth verse, and then intreateth of the former. In the first place hee perswadeth to trust and put confidence in God, which is a resting, and reposing our selues on him, and his fatherly prouidence, both for deliue-

deliuerance from all euill things, and the fruition of all good things needfull for vs touching this life, and that to come. And hereof hee preſcribeth the manner, that it bee with the whole heart, conſtant, ſtable, firme, and well fixed, without wauering or diffidence: for he would not haue his ſufficiencie or fidelity to be ſuſpected, or called into queſtion. Neither is this all, but much heed muſt alſo be taken that the heart bee not diuided, partly depending vpon the Lord, and hoping for helpe from him, and partly relying vpon other meanes, and putting affiance in them. Loue is communicable to creatures, ſo that it be in an inferiour place, and feare alſo if it bee ſubordinate to the feare of him, & agreeable to his ordinance; but confidence is annexed to his imperial crown, and reſerued peculiarly vnto himſelfe. And therfore he ſetteth it forth here by the contrary, oppoſing vnto it ones owne wiſedome; that is to ſay, wit and policie, whereby a man is able to ſhift, and make prouiſion for himſelfe in all caſes; and naming one fleſhly ſtay, hee meaneth all of like nature, as wealth, worthineſſe, ſtrength, friends, and innumerable others, more then can perticularly be recounted. And his admonition is, that we *leane not* vnto that one, or any of the reſt, taking the ſimilitude from aged, or impotent perſons, who commit the weight of their bodies to the ſtrength of their ſtaffe; if it bee ſound and ſtrong enough, they are vpholden by it, and ſtand faſt; if it be rotten, crackt, or too ſmall, they fall to the ground with the breach of the ſame: or from houſes or edifices which are ſupported by pillars, which being firme, doe beare vp the roofe and whole building; but they being weake and inſufficient, downe commeth all. And ſuch is the ſtate of thoſe which either vtterly renounce all affiance in God, & betake themſelues wholly to worldly helpes, or elſe truſt that hee will eſtabliſh them on the one ſide, and their owne props made of reeds and wheat ſtrawes, ſhall ſtedfaſtly vphold them on the other. It is as good for a foundation to bee laid altogether on the ſand, as partly on the ſand, and partly on a rocke; and an houſe to bee without buttraſſes on both ſides, if it haue nothing to ſuſtaine it, but ruinous walles on the one.

Verſe 6. *In all thy waies acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy waies.*

VNto truſt he requireth knowledge to be adioyned, which is the vnderſtanding, and apprehenſion of his will, and of his word, and this is declared by the vſe and exerciſe of it, and that by the ſubiects, and thoſe by their extent and largenes. The exerciſe of knowledge is an acknowledgement that profeſſion be made of him, with ſeruice done vnto him. The ſubiects thereof are the waies of men, the whole paſſage of their life, their actions which they performe, the words which they vtter, and the cogitations which they conceiue. The extent of the ſame is expreſſed by the note of vniuerſalitie, *all*: nothing is to bee done, nothing is to be ſpoken, nothing is to be imagined or thought of, contrary to the rules thereof. To this hee addeth a ſecond argument, taken from the benefit and proſperous euent of this knowing and acknowledging of him, *he ſhall direct thy workes*, and thy words, and purpoſes, by him thou ſhall be informed what is lawfull, and what is vnlawfull, what is holy, and what is ſinfull, what is vſefull, and what is hurtfull, what is moſt ſeaſonable, and what is out of ſeaſon: by him thy heart ſhall bee inclined to make choice of that which is beſt, and to refuſe that which is vnfitting: by him thou ſhalt be aſſiſted to performe thy actions, and vtter thy ſpeeches in ſuch manner, as ſhall be moſt acceptable to him, and profitable to thy ſelfe and others.

Verſe 7. *Be not wiſe in thine owne eyes, but feare the Lord, and depart from euill.*

A Third precept hee giueth to feare the Lord, which is to ſubiect thy ſelfe vnto him, and to ſtand in reuerent awe of him: for his truth, iuſtice, greatnes, goodnes, omniſcience, and vbiquitie: and becauſe of his holy word, his glorious acts and righteous iudgement. And hereunto he maketh a way by remouall of that which is againſt it, and an impediment vnto it,

it, which is selfe-liking. *Be not wise in thine owne eyes:* that is, bee not conceited, and haue no opinion of thine owne wisedome. It is a borrowed speech, wherein the estimation of the minde is compared to the aspects of the steare, according to other texts of Scripture. Psal. 101. 6. *Mine eyes shall be to the faithfull of the land:* that is, I will much regard them: and Isai. 66. vers. 2. To him will I looke, euen to him that is poore, and of a contrite spirit: that is, I will declare my fauour, and good acceptance, and minister comfort and helpe to him. Now by this one, he forbiddeth all proud thoughts, and imaginations of ones selfe, for what respect soeuer. For an hie minde, and loftie conceit of a mans owne excellencie will neuer agree with the true feare of God, which is euermore ioyned with the sight of thine owne vilenes. And this grace he setteth notably foorth by a worthie effect of it, *the departure from euill*, and that consisteth partly in auoiding the baites of it, that wee bee not insnared therewith, and fall into it: and partly in breaking off sinne (wherein we haue formerly liued) by sound repentance, and reformation: and setting it downe indefinitly hee vnderstandeth all kinde of wickednesse, as of heart, of act, of tongue, of any sense, of any member, and is the same in sense with that which the Apostle expresseth in other termes, *Let vs cleanse our selues from all filthinesse of flesh, and spirit.* 2. Cor. 7. 1.

Vers. 8. *So shall health bee to thy nauell, and marrow to thy bones.* Shikkui.

THis promise is added, not onely to the precept immediately foregoing it; but to those also in the fifth and sixth verses, which require an absolute dependance on the Lord, as this last doth an holy dread of him, with a disclaime of their owne wisedome, and an abandoning of all vitious behauiour. The reward promised is a good and comfortable estate, if not conspicuously maintained with great plenty, and abundance, yet secretly, and in an hidden and extraordinary manner nou-

riſhed with effectuall ſufficiencie. And this he alligorically reſembleth to the condition of an infant, which in the wombe receiueth nouriſhment at the nauell, whereby it enioyeth continuance of life, breath, health, and growth; & after it is borne by the milke which it ſucketh, and the food that is miniſtred vnto it; the bones are repleniſhed with moiſtneſſe, that is, marrow (by a metaphor taken from the moiſture of the earth, which feedeth the roots of plants with nouriture, and they the ſtocke, or ſtemme, and branches, with ſap.)

This marrow of the bones proueth the body to be in health, and good liking; as *Iob* deſcribeth the welfare of a man by the ſame note, ſaying, *His breaſts are full of milke, and his bones run full of marrow.* And this ſimilitude very aptly befitteth the matter in hand, and preuenteth ſuch exceptions as fleſhly men might take againſt the former precepts. For if we nothing relie on our wiſedome, but vtterly relinquiſh the eſtimation of it (ſaith carnall reaſon) how can we poſſibly auoide penurie? For men would ſoone bee ſtarued for all their faith and holineſſe, if they had no forecaſt to relieue themſelues withall. Which thing corrupt ſenſe alſo ſeemeth to confirme, and vpbraideth vs with the pouerty and need of many, which will not liue by their wits, nor bee opinionate thereof, which will not ſhift for themſelues indirectly, *but doe feare the Lord, and depart from euill.* Doe not we ſee (ſaith it) diuers of them quite deſtitute of lands, or liuing, ſtocke, or ſtore, or any thing before hand to keepe themſelues and their families? what be they the better for their humility, deuotion, and mortification? The fallacie of both theſe, as well of ſenſeleſſe ſenſe, as of vnreaſonable reaſon is detected, and confuted of the holy Ghoſt by this elegant ſimilitude. What wiſedome or policie hath the babe new borne to make ſhift for it ſelfe? and yet the body of it thriueth as well as the thrifty husbands ſpoken of in the Goſpell; and who looketh to the child in the wombe? or what ſubſtance hath it lying by to maintaine it? Nay, it hath not ſo much as the vſe of a mouth to receiue meate, or milke, if any hand, or breaſt could minister the ſame vnto it: and yet

Iob.21.24.

Luke 12.

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the rich mans great barnes full of corne did not better relieue him, then Gods prouidence, or ordinance doth this poore embrion.

Verſ. 9. *Honour the Lord with thy riches, and with the chiefe of thy reuennes.*

HAuing propoſed certaine of the principall parts of piety, as confidence in God, &c. he teacheth euery man how to beſtow and employ the ſame in any condition of life, according as he ſhall finde himſelfe either bleſſed, or croſſed by the hand of the Lord; and therefore in this verſe teacheth him how to vſe proſperity; and in the next ſaue one, how to beare aduerſity. Touching the former, he commandeth to *honour the Lord with his riches*; not only by diſcharging ſuch leuies, rates, and neceſſarie dues as are required at his hands, for the maintenance of his miniſtery, and the meanes of his ſeruice; but alſo by a franke and free contribution, for the furtherance of true religion, and Gods holy worſhip, as they were bound to pay tithes, and firſt fruites, and taught to bring free-will offerings, & voluntarie oblations. Now the things to be conſecrated he ſetteth forth, firſt, by the quality, that they be not things vile, baſe, and of no value, and as it were the refuſe of their ſubſtance, but the choyce, chiefe and principall thereof: the performance of which is commended in *Abel*, whom *Moſes* reported to haue offered of the fat of the cattell: and the default hereof is much taxed in the Iewes by *Malachy*, ſaying: *You offer vncleane bread on my altar, and ye ſay, Wherein haue we polluted thee? In that ye ſay, The table of the Lord is not to be regarded. And if ye offer the blood for a ſacrifice, is it not euill? and if ye offer the lame, and ſicke, is it not euill? offer it to thy Prince, will he be content with it, ſaith the Lord of hoſts? But curſed be the deceiuer, which hath in his flocke a male, and offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing.* Gen. 4. 4. Mal. 1. 7. 8. 14.

Secondly, by the generality of kinds, that they dedicate to God part of all their profits, whether it be of the croppe of the ground, or of the fruites of the trees, or of the cattell of the

flocke, or of whatsoeuer other commodities doe accrew vnto them. And though riches be onely here specified, yet are all other endowments to the same purpose to bee destinated, and after the same manner to be vsed; as credit, authority, strength, knowledge, eloquence, cunning, and other good gifts both of grace and nature.

Vers. 10. *So shall thy barnes be filled with abundance, and thy wine presse runne ouer with new wine.*

AND because God cannot bee well honoured with riches without charges, and no charges presse a carnall heart so hard as those that are best expended; hee therefore encourageth vs to bestow this cost, and that with a promise of greater gaine, which he hyperbolically amplifieth, & with an holy excessiue kind of speech: his meaning is, that we shall be so farre from being impouerished by this cost, as that contrariwise we shall bee enriched by the same, the blessing of God being so great vpon our labour, as that wee shall haue as much corne as our barnes and granaries can containe; and wine in such abundance, as that our wine presses, tubs, and other vessels shall run ouer with plentie, or all other commodities proportionable and equiualent vnto those two. And though these things should faile to rise to such a quantity; yet this promise doth neuer faile of verity and truth, for as much as lesse measure of earthly possessions may oftentimes be of greater vse, and much more for comfort and contentment. The wisedome of God seeth in this argument a pregnancie, and aptnesse to induce men to obey the exhortation: and therefore he putteth it as a forcible weapon into the hand of faith, for the suppression and keeping vnder of diffidence, which causeth so much grudging and restrainednesse, most men thinking all to bee lost that is well bestowed: whereas if they could apprehend, and foresee the gaine that will redound vnto them, and the profit they shal receiue, they would esteeme benificence, and large expences discreetly laid out for good vses, to bee the chiefe point of thrift, and all good husbandrie: and they may well know, that

when

when their barnes, wine preſſes, ſhops, ſtore-houſes, chambers, coffers, treaſuries, fields and paſtures are repleniſhed with all ſtore, plenty, and furniture belonging ſeuerally vnto them; yet they haue not therein attained vnto the fulneſſe of their wealth, nor beſt of their ſubſtance. For theſe earthly riches are promiſed and giuen onely as pledges and pawnes of more worthfull poſſeſſions, euen celeſtiall treaſures, and inheritances.

Verſ. 11. 12. *My ſonne, deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction. For whom the Lord loueth, he correcteth, euen as a father the ſonne in whom he delighteth.*

WE haue ſeene how, and for what cauſe God is to bee ſerued in the ſtate of proſperity, whence hee paſſeth to another point, teaching vs ſubmiſſiuely, and patiently to yeeld to his words, and the ſtripes of his hands in the ſtate of aduerſitie. And this he doth by way of a (*Prolepſis*) after this manner. *Obiect.* Notwithſtanding all the wealth, and abundance with other kindes, and degrees of felicitie promiſed to them that feare the Lord, and dedicate themſelues, and that which they haue vnto his ſeruice; yet experience ſheweth that none are more afflicted with pouertie, and other croſſes, then ſuch as are moſt deuoted to him, being willing to depart with any thing for his ſake. *Anſw.* We finde this to be true indeed, in all ages and places it ſo falles out; howbeit the afflictions which they ſuſtaine are not puniſhments comming from the wrath of God to their hurt, but chaſtizements from his loue, and laid vpon them for their good: whereupon he exhorteth to beare them accordingly, deliuering a precept, and backing the ſame with reaſons. The precept containeth two rules monitorie, directed to the ſonnes of wiſedome, which are fruitfull readers, attentiue hearers, and embracers of her: the firſt is, that *they deſpiſe not correction*, viz. that they make not light account of it, as they doe who will not take notice of any ſtrokes, or iudgements that light vpon them; or if they bee touched

touched with the feeling thereof, they impute the same either to fortune or destinie, or ascribe all to inferiour and subordinate causes, and turne their eyes from beholding the hand of him that striketh, and from the sight of their owne sins, which by due desert haue caused themselues to be smitten: and as they doe who (notwithstanding they feele the smart of the rod, and cannot but see the iustice of God therein) are yet become senseleſſe and obdurate, without godly sorrow, without godly shame, without godly feare, and without all godly remorse and humiliation: and as they doe who seeme to bee somewhat affrighted, and for a time deiected with griefe, and humilitie, yet proceed not to reformation of their vicious behauiour: and as they who in extremitie of miserie reforme some part of their misbehauiour, and seeme for a time penitent, and very contrite for their offences; yet when the calamitie is passed ouer, and they are freed from punishment and perill, they returne like the dogge to his vomit, and liue as impiously, as impurely, and as vnrighteously, as euer they did in former time: so then this is to despise correction, not to bee bettered by it, by making some good and profitable vse of it.

The other rule is, to auoide another extremitie of being *wearie of his correction*, viz. when men be discouraged at their afflictions, when they languish and faint vnder the burthen of them: for that produceth many pernitious effects, thereby they are disabled from all good seruices, they cannot be industrious in their seuerall callings with any cheerefulnes: they cannot pray with any comfort, they cannot giue thankes to God with any ioyfulnes: they cannot embrace the word with good attention, nor meditate in it with any delight. We reade in Exodus that the Lord sent a gracious message vnto his peo-
Exod.6.7.8. ple, saying, *I will take you for my people, and will be your God, and you shall know that I the Lord your God will bring you from the burthens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land, which I sware I would giue to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Iacob, and will giue it you for a possession: So Moses told the children of Israel thus:* but with what successe, the same text telleth

telleth vs, *they hearkened not to voyces for anguiſh of ſpirit, and cruell bondage.* Hence proceede diſtempers, paſſions, murmurings, grieuous concluſions of men againſt themſelues: as that God abhorreth them, as damnable hypocrites, reprobates, and caſt awayes: that there will neuer be an end of their miſeries, and troubles, that they ſhall not be able to beare them long, but fall downe vnder them with deſperation. Hence proceeds indirect ſeeking of helpe, vntimely, and vnconſcionably, and after a ſhifting manner. Such euents are not onely ordinary in theſe dayes, but haue bin ancient in former times, and that amongſt the deareſt of Gods owne ſeruants, ſuch as were *Iob*, and *Ieremiah*, whoſe diſcouraged hearts, drew their tongues to paſſionate ſpeeches, curſing the day of their birth, and the news tellers thereof, with ſundry imprecations againſt themſelues, and their innocent friends: and as were the afflicted Saints in the time of the Prophets complaining after this ſort: *The Lord hath forſaken me, and my God hath forgotten me:* and after this, *My ſtrength and mine hope is periſhed from the Lord.* And as was *Dauids* crying out in his haſte, that *all men were lyars*, ſeeming to taxe *Samuel* amongſt the reſt, that there was no truth in any, no not in him, nor euen then when in the name of the Lord hee aſſured him of their kingdome. And therefore in his diſtruſtfulnes concluding that at one time or other, he ſhould dye by the hands of *Saul*, he fled out of Iſrael into Paleſtina, from the Church of God to the heathen, where he was driuen to miſerable perplexity, to ſhew diuers vncomely tricks, and to play ſuch parts as were altogether vnſeemely for his profeſſion, place and perſon. The reaſons whereby he inciteth men to indure afflictions without contempt, or diſcouragement, are two: the firſt is, the principall efficient, the Lord himſelfe, who is to be feared in the leaſt of his workes: yea in his word, and who hath a whole forreſt of rods to ſcourge vs withall, if we profit not by fewer, or ſmaller; which if we well conſidered, we would ſtoope at the leaſt, and feare at the firſt ſhaking of his hand at vs. For to contemne his chaſtiſements is to deſpiſe himſelfe, and to cauſe him to loſe his labour in miſtering of vs. For we eſteeme it a ſigne of

Iob 3.3. Ier.2.14. Iſai.49.14. Lam.3.8. 1.Sam.11.11.

graceleſneſſe

graceleſneſſe for a childe beaten by his father not to ſhed teares, ſo farre as oft times it draweth teares from his fathers eyes: euen ſo much more it argueth want of grace in vs, if we melt not when we are corrected by God himſelfe.

The ſecond reaſon, and that which is to confirme the heart with patience, is the mouing cauſe, together with the formall, the fauour and goodneſſe of God inducing him to inflict chaſtiſements, that hee bee not driuen to execute vengeance and puniſhments. And this is cleered by a compariſon of the like dealing of a father with his childe, who doth not beate his ſonne to kill him, but to correct him: not to breake a legge, or an arme, but his ſtubborne hart: not to make him runne away, but to cauſe him to returne to a better minde, and to better behauiour: and in a word, not becauſe hee hateth him, but becauſe he beareth a ſingular loue vnto him.

Iaphik. Verſe 13. *Bleſſed is the man that findeth wiſedome, and the man that getteth vnderſtanding.*

FOr the performance of the former duties hee preſcribeth the moſt effectuall meanes, *viz.* the vertue, and knowledge of Gods holy word, which hee calleth by the name of wiſedome, the commendation whereof hee ſetteth foorth by ſundrie arguments, and illuſtrations. And in the firſt place he propoſeth a large, and notable effect, the confluence and marrow of many effects, the felicitie, and happie eſtate of thoſe vpon whom it is conferred. And this hee declareth by an *Epiphonema*, or acclamation, to the end to rauiſh our mindes with the excellencie of it. *Bleſſed is the man* (ſaith he) oh how bleſſed is the man that findeth true wiſedome, which diſcerneth what it is, and wherein it conſiſteth, and accordingly valueth it as a thing moſt admirable, rare, and precious: *and the man that getteth vnderſtanding*, which by diligent trauaile in the Scriptures, and profitable vſe of Gods ſacred miniſterie obtaineth ſoundnes of iudgement, vprightnes of heart, and a good conſcience, as farre as he is able to conforme himſelfe to the will of the Lord, in beleeuing his promiſes, and obeying his commande-

mandements. The word which wee tranſlate *(getteth)* ſignifieth to draw, or fetch out, being borrowed from ſuch as work in mines, who digge in the earth, and from thence bring forth gold, or ſiluer, or other mettals.

Verſe 14.15. *For the merchandize of it is better then the merchandize of ſiluer: and the gaine thereof better then fine gold. She is more pretious then rubies: and all things that thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared to her.*

HE maketh good his poſition by compariſons: firſt, metaphorically equalizing wiſedome with gainfull commodities: it is not like to dead ſtuffe, or wares which will lie vpon a chapmans hand without vent, or vtterance, but it is a merchandize that is vendible, and as good as readie money. Secondly, he giueth a precedencie vnto it, and preferreth it before pretious treaſures, and ſuch as are had in eſtimation, whereof hee maketh a ſpeciall enumeration of three, euery one excelling other. The firſt is ſiluer: the ſecond is gold better then that: the third pretious ſtones, which are richer then both, and addeth a fourth more generall, and comprehends the former, and all other things of like ſort, whatſoeuer is deſirable, or men can ſet their hearts vpon. For God beſtoweth theſe treaſures vpon his enemies, and wiſdome vpon his friends, and children only: theſe treaſures are of earthly matter, but wiſedome is celeſtiall and heauenly: theſe treaſures are vncertaine and of no continuance; but wiſedome is conſtant, and euerlaſting: theſe treaſures are many times hurtfull, and pernitious both to ſoule and body; but wiſedome onely vſefull and profitable: theſe treaſures are fugitiue, and leaue a man at his death, when he hath moſt need of comfort; but wiſedome then ſtandeth to him, and miniſtreth then moſt conſolation to his conſcience: theſe treaſures procure no fauour before the iudgement ſeate of God; but wiſedome bringeth then acceptation and glorie.

Verſe

Vers. 16. *Length of daies is in her right hand, and in her left hand honour and riches.*

FRom the general effects of wisdome he descendeth to her spirituall benefits, which are parts of that blessed estate before propounded, and proues that it is better then gold and siluer, and other delectable things, in that it is the cause and principall meanes whereby good men obtaine the fruition of them, and some of them are external blessings, & concerne the outward man, and these are contained in this verse: some are internall, and concerne the inward man, and thesewe shal find in the two next. And here hee vseth an elegant *Prosopopeia*, ascribing to wisdome the person of a wealthy Lady, or bountifull woman, who is neuer empty handed, but hath alwaies princely gifts in a readinesse to bestow vpon her fauourites, and followers, and amongst which that which is first mentioned, is more then any potentate, or all creatures are able to giue; and that is, *length of daies*, or a long life, whereof the greatest plenty of earthly commodities are appurtenances, and attendants. And this she euer granteth with limitations: if it stand with the good welfare of her friends: if it inableth them to be seruiceable to their maker, and profitable to their brethren, and thrifty for the encrease of their owne happines: if it detaine them not too long from their eternall rest, and presence of their Sauiour, and the enioyment of immortall blessednesse. *Honour* somtimes, and to some persons, dignities, titles and preferments, and alwaies vnto all, a reuerent estimation, in the hearts, and by the testimony of the godly, vnto whom their graces appeare: yea the very wicked doe feare them, and stand in dread of them; according to that saying of *Micah*, They shall be like a *young Lion among the flocks of sheepe*. And albeit the tongues of malcuolent men be commonly prest to traduce both them and their waies, yet many of those that are most depraued may truly say with the Apostle *Paul*; *We approue our selues to euery mans conscience in the sight of God*. Wee might bring the vngodly mens owne behauiour

Micah 5.8.

2. Cor. 4. 2. 3.

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in their extremities for cleere confirmation of this: whose prayers doe many of them sooner craue when they are in terrours? whose counsels doe they more willingly aske in distresses? whose care and fidelity doe they more securely depend vpon for their children, and their estates, when death will permit them no longer to manage their affaires? do not these things argue that they repute them to bee holy, to bee wise, to be righteous, faithfull and trustie? And can this good opinion bee had of them without honour? yet all haue not this in like measure, nor attaine to this forthwith so soone as they entertaine wisedome: for the vertues of many lie hidden for a time, & appeare not to the world, but through the virulent tongues of some, they and their actions are misdeemed, and hardly censured of others, and many are perswaded indeed that they are grieuous offenders whom God approueth to bee faithfull and faultlesse: but this is not a perpetuall infamie, neither shall it alway cleaue vnto them. For God will not faile in due time to cleere their innocency according to his promise in the Psalme, saying: *Commit thy way vnto the Lord, trust in him, and hee shall bring it to passe. He shall bring forth thy righteousnesse as the light, and thy iudgement as the noone day.* And in the same verity the Apostle fully agreeth with the Prophet, though he apply it to an other purpose, when by opposition of contraries hee saith; *Some mens sins are open before hand, and goe before vnto iudgement; but some mens sinnes follow after. Likewise also good works are manifest before hand, and they that are otherwise cannot bee hid.* Psal. 37. 5. 6. 1. Tim. 5. 24. 25.

And to honour he adioyneth riches, whereof though wisdomes enemies be also partakers, and that in abundance, yet are they not made equall therin with her friends and seruants: for they are not both enriched with the same hand, neither are they giuen them for the same cause, neither doe they enioy the fruit and benefit of them in the same maner. It is the hand of Gods prouidence that ministreth to the wicked, and it is the hand of his fauour and kindnesse that ministreth to the godly. And it is not by way of extenuation called a *left hand*, but onely to declare that he is liberal with the one, as well as with

with the other, hee bleſſeth the righteous with them, as with ornaments and rewards, for a recompence of their ſeruice, but he curſeth the wicked therewith as with gyues and ſnares for a puniſhment of their ſinnes: the righteous haue true right in them, and good vſe of them, and ſound comfort with them: but the wicked are vſurpers, and therefore puniſhable for their intruſion, and they either halfe ſtarue themſelues through niggardize, or elſe glut themſelues with voluptuouſneſſe, or are filled with toilefull troubles, ſorrowes, enuies, feares, and manifold vexations; by all which it appeareth that the wealth of the godly is the peculiar gifture of wiſedome, and yet not ſuch as is communicated to all: for it will bee burdenous to ſome, and dangerous to others, by raiſing vp their minds with pride, or drawing downe their affections to the world, by meanes whereof they ſhould haue leſſe communion with Chriſt, or participation of his heauenly riches, and therefore be will not lay too heauie load on them that cannot well beare it, nor fate them with ouer much who are ſo ſubiect to ſurphets, but ſtinteth and dieteth them, as parents doe their children, and yet they ſhall be ſure to bee prouided for with enough, and freed from the perill of want and penurie.

Verſ. 17. *Her waies are waies of pleaſantneſſe; and all her pathes are peace.*

IN the premiſes were ſpecified the bleſſings which wiſdome bringeth to the outward man; and in this preſent ſentence are added certaine deſireable graces which it worketh in the inward man, as that it refreſheth the heart with ſweet delight and ioyfulneſſe, eſtabliſheth the conſcience with peace and tranquility, which he ſeemeth to mention for preuention of the exception that corrupt fleſh and blood is apt to take, and the quarrels which it is wont to picke againſt Gods holy wiſedome, as that it is painefull, and requireth more labour and trauell, yea and the obedience to it is ſower and bitter, denying vs the delights that others haue, requiring more ſtrict and auſtere behauiour then others vſe: and this is not all, but it makes

makes life vnpeaceable without reſt and quietneſſe, by procuring many moleſtations and troubles. There is no ſuch matter of tediouſneſſe, and reſtleſnes, (ſaith he) for *her waies, viz.* the worke and duties which ſhe preſcribeth (it being a borrowed ſpeech taken from trauellers: for euery good ſeruice well performed is a ſtep towards heauen, and a proceeding towards endleſſe bliſſe and happineſſe) *are waies of pleaſure, viz.* minister much ſpirituall ioy, and delectation to the ſoule of a regenerate man, notwithſtanding they bee very diſtaſtfull to corrupt nature: as is auerred by our Sauiour, ſaying; *Take my yoke vpon you, and learne of me; for I am meeke and lowly, and ye ſhall finde reſt to your ſoules; for my yoke is eaſie, and my burthen light:* and alſo by Saint *Iohn*, flatly, and in plaine termes denying that his commandements are grieuous. *And all her pathes are peace*; all that Chriſtian conuerſation which ſhee appoints and directs her attendants to walke in, tendeth to the comfort of their hearts by the aſſurance of Gods fauour and loue to them: for their ſincere obedience is an infallible teſtimony of their ſound faith, and that apprehendeth Gods iuſtice to be ſatisfied by Chriſt, and ſo their ſinnes to be remitted: and ſo the Lord to be reconciled, and ſo their fierce and vnquied conſcience to be pacified. And this is agreeable to thoſe holy ſayings of the Apoſtle: *Being iuſtified by faith, wee haue peace with God through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, by whom alſo we haue acceſſe by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand, and reioyce in the hope of the glory of God, &c. The kingdome of God is not meate and drinke, but righteouſneſſe and peace, and ioy in the holy Ghoſt.*

Mat. 11. 29. 30.

1. Ioh. 5. 3.

Rom. 5. 1. 2.

Rom. 14.

Verſ. 18. *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her: and happie is euery one that retaineth her.*

THe laſt and largeſt ſpirituall bleſſing which wiſedome brings, he hath reſerued to the laſt place, for the knitting vp of all, and that is euerlaſting life, and all the fulneſſe of felicity with it; for it is a meanes, inſtrument, and pledge of our reſtitution to a better ſtate then wee loſt in *Adam*: which is

made lightsome by a similitude of the tree of life planted in the middest of Paradise, which was to our first parents a sacrament of eternall life. She not onely restoreth vs to this happie condition, but also conserueth and keepeth vs in the same; as appeareth by the promise made to the faithfull, in the Reuelation of Saint *Iohn*. *To him that ouercommeth I will giue to eate of the tree of life, which is in the middest of the Paradise of God.* Whereas contrariwise, *Adam* being once ouercome was excluded, and kept out of Paradise, that hee should neuer afterwards tast of that sacramentall tree. And as this diuine wisedome is so effectuall to them that lay hold on her; so it is no lesse fruitfull in them, it fructifieth often, yea continually, and sendeth forth great variety of Christian vertues; and therfore it is said in the Apocalyps, that this tree *beareth twelue manner of fruits, and yeeldeth her fruit euery moneth.* Hereupon he concludeth that which he first expounded, that she doth conferre happinesse, and make men blessed, but withall he noteth who they bee, and what they doe; not onely such as heare of her, speake of her, or looke vpon her, but *take hold of her*: neither so alone (for that is not enough) but *retaine her* also and hold her fast.

Apoc. 2 7.

Gen. 3. 22. 23.

Apoc. 22. 2.

Vers. 19. *The Lord by wisedome hath founded the earth, by vnderstanding he hath stablished the heauens.*

Conen.

Vers. 20. *By his knowledge the depths are broken vp; and the clouds drop downe dew.*

WIsedome hauing bin iustly praised for her great bountie, and gratious effects, is here further commended, and duly magnified in respect of the most excellent, glorious, and illustrious cause of it: for it is that whereof God *Iehouah*, the eternall and originall of all things, is the author, who is described by certaine workes, wherein conspicuously hee doth exercise the same; and these are in number foure: whereof two are concerning the creation, in the 19. v; and two concerning the ordering and gouernment, in the 20. v. and according to these he would haue all the rest to be considered.

Touching

Touching the firſt, it is ſaid that *the Lord by wiſedom founded the earth*: vnder which hee comprehendeth the ſeas alſo. Which kinde of ſpeech he vſeth, not becauſe hee hath laid any thing vnder the earth, as a foundation or ground-worke, whereupon it is ſuſtained like other buildings: (for it hangeth vpon nothing) but to note the ſure and ſtable ſtanding of it, as if it had a foundation anſwerable to the building.

Touching the ſecond he ſaith, *by vnderſtanding* (and as the word ſignifieth) aptly, and trimly frameth, and likewiſe makes firme, and ſure, and ſafe from periſhing, and conſtant in the courſes, and reuolutions of the ſtarrie moueable ſpheres, ſo long as the world endureth, the *heauens*, whereby he meaneth that that is ouer vs, the celeſtiall bodies, motions, and influences, and beneath theſe, all the regions of the aire.

Touching the third, it is ſaid, *By his knowledge the depths are broken vp*, that is, he claue the depths, made the fountaines that runne along within the earth, to cleaue aſunder, and to breake foorth of the bowels of the earth, and to runne in the channels of the ſame, and the ſame iſſuing out of the entrailes of the earth, haue alſo fit currents for their courſes vpon the earth: for wee may ſee what meete and conuenient diſcents are ordained for them from dales to valleys, and from valleys to valleys, from well heads they haue gutters to conuey them to ſmall brookes, and the ſmaller brookes runne in rilles, and the rilles paſſe out into greater riuers and the great riuers haue a ready paſſage prepared for them to flow into the Sea; otherwiſe ſome places would be turned into bogges or fennes, and made vnfruitfull; others would be drowned vp, and made vnhabitable, and few or none would be ſo commodious for men, and other creatures, as now they are.

Touching the laſt, hee ſaith, *The clowds drop downe dew*: whereby he meaneth raine, and other falling moyſture of all ſorts, which are vapours aſcending out of the earth, to the end that being diſtilled in the aire, they might returne againe with greater vertue to water the ground. And this is obſeruable for the manner, that it commeth moderatly with drops, and not exceſſiuely with ſtreames: if he ſhould open the windowes

dowes of heauen, and let it gush downe, as hee did in *Noahs* time, it would drowne vp, and destroy all; but trickling down in this milde sort, is comfortable for men, and beasts, and profitable for corne, grasse, herbes, trees, and all kinde of plants both for their growth and fruitfulnes. Thus God is magnified by his workes of creation, conseruation, and prouidence, that each of those is done by his wisedome, and vnderstanding, to shew his Alsufficiencie in performing his promise to them that embrace his wisedome.

Verse 21. *My sonne, let not these things depart from thine eyes: keepe sound wisedome, and discretion.*

Mezimma.

HEre wee haue an application of the former discourse: for out of the same hee inferreth an exhortation, or rather reneweth that which he had before propounded, and confirmeth it with fresh and fit arguments. The exhortation is deliuered first negatiuely in the manner of a caueat, *Let not them*, either wisedome it selfe, or the reasons brought to require obedience to it, *depart from thine eyes*, either forgotten, or carelesly neglected. The simile is either taken from Archers, which intentiuely aime at the marke they shoote at; or from Pilots, or sailers, who with all possible diligence labour to retaine the sight of the Lode-starre to direct their course accordingly; or from wise trauellers who most heedfully marke their way, and therefore haue their eyes constantly vpon it, lest through their negligence they should misse the same, and wander into by-paths: or from the vse of philacteries, and writings of the Commandements vpon the edges of their garments required in the Law, that they should not onely weare them, but with all heed respect them.

Next affirmatiuely, *keepe*, viz. marke, and remember, set thy delight vpon, and practise: let iudgement, memorie, affection, and conscience retaine *sound wisedome*, not humane, vaine inuentions, not the deuices of mens braines, which to carnall reason seeme glorious and excellent, but that which God doth inspire, and ratifie in his owne holy word; this he calleth

that which is true, and ſound, and ſolid matter, as if all other things, eſpecially fleſhly policies ſeeme rather to be, then to be indeed, and rather ſhadowes, then ſubſtances. *Diſcretion*] The word ſignifieth cogitation or thinking, or good aduiſement: for that although wiſedome come from God, and be in our ſelues, and in our mindes; yet he would haue vs vſe our minds and cogitations to the attaining of it, and conſtant meditation after it is attained.

Verſe 22. *So ſhall they be life to thy ſoule, and grace to thy necke.*

VNto this precept hee addeth diuers great and gracious promiſes for life, honour, and ſafetie, &c. and therefore ſaith he, *So they*, the wiſedome & grace of God by this meanes entertained, *ſhall be life to thy ſoule* ſhall quicken thee in the inward man, and ſhall be as the ſeedes of eternall life, animating thy ſoule, as that doth thy body; which without theſe is but a ſpirituall carcaſe, like to a ſenſeleſſe, liueleſſe, & ſpiritleſſe body. For the ſtate of none without grace, is better then that of the Gentiles, without knowledge, of whom it is ſaid, *that hauing their vnderſtanding darkened, they were alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, becauſe of the hardnes of their heart.* And therefore in diuers places we ſhall finde exhortations to embrace the word of God with ſound knowledge of it, vpon this ground: as, *Keepe my commandements, and liue: and my law as the apple of thine eye.* Prou. 7. 2. And Iſai. 55. 3. *Incline your eares to me: heare and your ſoule ſhall liue.*

And grace to thy necke] Ornaments of honour, like to chaines or iewels wherewith great perſonages are wont to decke themſelues, as well to ſet foorth their dignities, as to adorne their perſons: for with both theſe are wiſedoms children graced: they of hie degree, being the ſonnes and daughters of God, and more honoured with ſpirituall graces, and holy behauiour then any other can poſſibly be with ſiluer and gold, or any kind of iewels, though neuer ſo rich and coſtly: ſo

that they need not be aſhamed to come into any preſence, eſpecially of God, they need not be afraid of cõtempt, and diſgrace, for good men will reuerence them, though in the world neuer ſo poore and baſe, and none will deſpiſe them but contemptible perſons, who alſo thereby ſhall get more ſhame themſelues for their folly, and be filled with reproch by Gods righteous iudgement.

Verſe 23. *Thou ſhalt walke in the way ſafely, and thy foote ſhall not ſtumble.*

Verſe 24. *When thou lieſt downe thou ſhalt not be afraid: yea, thou ſhalt lie downe, and thy ſleepe ſhall be ſweete.*

AS life was promiſed as a recompence to godlineſſe: and after that honour as an ornament to life: ſo here is ſafetie added as an indiuiduall companion of them both, and a good man ſhall not faile of abroad, or at home, waking, or ſleeping, in the day, or in the night: abroad, and in the day hee ſhall be ſo farre from ruine and mortall hurt, as that hee ſhall not ſo much as daſh his foote againſt a ſtone: at home, and in the night, he ſhall enioy ſuch freedome from feare, as that hee ſhall not ſo much as breake his ſleepe for it. *Then* (ſaith he) *thou ſhalt walke in thy way ſafely*, viz. thou ſhalt liue without perill in thy whole courſe: for as it is true being literally taken, that in his trauels and iourneys he ſhall from God and his Angels finde protection, ſo he ſhall alſo in all other his affaires, which according to wiſedome hee ſhall walke in: for they are alſo called the waies of men: for ſhe ſheweth vs which be ſafe, and which be dangerous, and as well how to walke, as where to walke, procuring alſo Gods direction, defence, and bleſſing. *And thy foote ſhall not ſtumble*, viz. no harme ſhall befall thee whileſt thou art where thou ſhouldeſt be, and doe that which thou oughteſt: for otherwiſe bodilie calamities may befall the beſt that ſhall faile of theſe, though not to his deſtruction, as the caſe of the good Prophet doth witneſſe, whom God cauſed a lion to kill for breaking his commandements: and notwithſtanding righteous and innocent

1. King. 13. 24.

cent men be alſo expoſed to violence, and many ſeeming hurts, yet all their afflictions and ſufferings do rather confirme them to ſtand the faſter, then turne to be ſtumbling blockes, whereby they ſhall fall. *When thou lieſt downe*, and all the while thou keepeſt thy bed, which wiſedome will not permit to bee beyond meaſure, *thou ſhalt not be afraid*, thou needeſt not dread any perill; *When thou lieſt downe, thy ſleepe ſhall be ſweet*, peaceable, comfortable, and delightfull, as dainty food is to the taſte of man, while thou dependeſt on God; for the heart, that is refreſhed in the day with the feeling of Gods fauour, will reliſh the ſame in the night, and be ſupported with the aſſurance of his protection. *Dauid* confirmes this vnto vs by his owne experience: *Thou haſt put more gladneſſe in my heart, then when their corne and wine encreaſed. I will lay mee downe and ſleepe in peace, for thou Lord maketh me dwell in ſafety.* Pſal.4.8 9. And though *Peter* knew nothing but that he ſhould be both arrained & condemned to death, & likely enough alſo to be executed on the morrow; yet reſting aſſured that the Lord in goodnes would not faile him, he ſlept ſo ſoundly in priſon and irons, vnder the cuſtodie of ſo many armed ſouldiers, that the Angell was driuen to ſmite him hard before he could awake him, ſo little was he troubled at the eminent perill, which all the people, good and bad concluded that he liued in.

Verſ. 25. *Be not afraid of any ſudden feare, neither of the deſolation of the wicked, when it commeth.*

THe ſafety in the other verſe promiſed, is in this commended, and ſhewed to be the more deſireable by that ſound confidence, and comfortable boldneſſe which is adioyned to it, being for the certainty and lawfulneſſe of it commanded by a precept that containeth in it the force of a promiſe, *Bee not afraid, viz.* thou haſt no cauſe to feare, neither ſhalt thou bee perplexed with feare: and that hee will as well giue the grace of boldleſſe to the godly, as require the exerciſe of it, the Pſalmiſt teſtifieth, ſaying; *He ſhall not be afraid of euill tidings; his heart is fixed, he truſteth in the Lord.* Pſal.112. And as here, ſo in other

places we find imperatiue ſpeeches to ſtand for firme ſpeeches:
Pſal.37.3. as, *Truſt in the Lord, doe good, dwell in the land, and bee fed aſſuredly, viz.* Thou ſhalt dwell in the land, and not faile to bee fed, and haue all ſufficiency miniſtred to thee. Affiance, and holy ſecurity is ſet forth by the contrary, with the circumſtance of time, *Be not afraid*, or thou ſhalt not feare ſudden feare; *the deſolation of the wicked when it commeth*; euen then when perils ſhal horribly diſmay the wicked, & when plagues, and feareſull iudgements ſhall vtterly ſweepe them away, thy heart ſhall bee quiet and peaceable, reſting aſſured of Gods mercy and goodneſſe, and ſhalt be freed from the iudgements that fall on them, or at leaſt be ſafe from the ſting thereof: no poyſon, no venome, no hurt ſhall proceed from them; onely ſo much thou ſhalt ſuffer, and bee partaker of, as ſhall make thee the better if thou liue, and haſten thy happineſſe if thou die. This amplification is of no ſmall importance, but the ſame whereby other holy writers doe much magnifie the maruelous mercy of God, and the admirable felicity of his people. *Iob* was animated with it by *Eliphaz*, in this manner: *Hee ſhall*
Iob 5.19.20.21 *deliuer thee in ſix troubles, and in the ſeuenth, there ſhall none euill come vnto thee. In famine he ſhall redeeme thee from death, and in warre from the power of the ſword. Thou ſhalt bee hid from the ſcourge of the tongue; neither ſhalt thou bee afraid of deſtruction when it commeth.* And elſewhere after this ſort: *When other*
Iob 22.29. *men are caſt downe, thou ſhalt ſay, there is liſting vp.* And *Dauid* inſiſteth vpon the point at large in one of his Pſalmes, when
Pſal.91.5.6.7. he ſaith: *Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the terrour by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the peſtilence that walketh in darkeneſſe, nor for the deſtruction that deſtroyeth at noone day: A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come neere thee. But with thine eyes thou ſhalt ſee the reward of the wicked.*

Verſ. 26. *For the Lord ſhall bee for thy confidence, and ſhall keepe thy foot from taking.*

THat which he had ſpoken before by way of commandement or promiſe, he now confirmeth and maketh good by

by a ſtrong and inuincible argument; namely, the omnipotent efficient, and worker of this fortitude in the hearts of his people, and the preſeruer of their ſafety: *The Lord ſhall bee for thy confidence*, he ſhall ſupport and ſuſtaine thy hope, he ſhall encourage and eſtabliſh thy heart, *and ſhal keepe thy foote from taking*, becauſe it is an old cuſtome for the wicked to lay ſnares and ſpread nets for the feet of the godly: and as common a thing as for fowlers and hunters to ſet ſnares and traps for birds, and beaſts; therefore the Lord doth gratiouſly deliuer his from being taken in the ſame. And when he himſelfe doth lay his nets and his grins for the vngodly; he will moſt prouidently take order that his owne be not intangled therein. The like allegorie is vſed by the Prophet for this ſame purpoſe: *Surely he ſhall deliuer thee from the ſnare of the fowler, and from the noiſome peſtilence.* Pſal. 91. 3.

Verſ. 27. *Withhold not the good from the owners therof, when it is in the power of thine hand to doe it.*

NOw *Salomon* preſcribeth thoſe duties which properly belong to the ſecond Table of the Law, as the former from the fourth verſe hitherto did to the firſt.

And herein hee requireth,
1. Benificence, that wee bee helpefull to our neighbour.
2. Innocencie, that we neither thinke nor do him hurt.

For our benificence or well doing, he would haue vs to performe as much as wee can in this verſe; and as ſoone as wee can, and is conuenient, in the next. He inciteth men hereunto by the rule of equitie and iuſtice, in that the neglect of it to them to whom it ſhould bee ſhewed, is a detaining of a due from them to whom by right it belongeth. *Withhold not good*, but readily miniſter it, whether it be defence, reliefe, counſell, comfort, or whatſoeuer elſe is expedient and neceſſarie, *from the owners thereof*, which haue deſerued it, to whom it hath been promiſed, which ſtand in need of it, or to whom any way it belongeth, though not by a ciuill intereſt, yet by a Chriſtian right,

right, though they cannot exact it, yet if God haue allotted it to them, and call vpon thee to offer it, and out of mercy and kindneſſe freely to beſtow it. *If power be in thy hand to doe it*, if it ſtand with thy ability and calling, prouided alſo that thou ſo giue vnto one, that thou bee not of neceſſity compelled to defraud others which are neere to thee, to whom thou art more bound. That liberality and well doing is a duty, that our poore diſtreſſed brethrē haue a right in it, that the not exerciſing of it, is an vniuſt detention of a due from them to whom it is owing, our Sauiour Chriſt himſelfe hath already witneſſed, Mat. 25. and will further make good, as all eares ſhall heare, and al eyes ſhall ſee, by his laſt ſentence, and execution of the ſame at his glorious appearance. And if it be a ſin not to relieue them that be in want, much more then violently, or fraudulently to take or keepe ought from the right owners, though men haue neuer ſo much power in their hands to beare them out in it; and therefore *Iob* durſt not lift vp his hand againſt the fatherleſſe, though he ſaw his helpe in the gate, *viz.* though the bench, and the Iudge, and the Magiſtrates would haue backed, and maintained him in his iniuſtice.

Verſ. 28. *Say not to thy neighbour, Goe, and come againe to morrow, I will giue it* thee, *when thou haſt it by thee.*

BEfore he proued benificence to be a neceſſary duty when our neighbous need requireth helpe, and our ability ſufficeth to yeeld it, becauſe in this caſe God hath made vs ſtewards, and put into our hands ſome part of the portion which he hath appointed to others, and therefore in conſcience wee are to repute them the owners of it, and our ſelues the debtors till we haue made payment thereof; and then he directeth the manner of it, that it be ſeaſonable and timely, and conſequently that it be done willingly, and with cheretulneſſe. And this hee intimateth by prohibiting delaies vnto thoſe that are in preſent want, and come in hope to ſue for ſpeedy ſuccour, whom pitileſſe men are wont to turne away with the worthleſſe almes of vaine breath, and guileſull promiſes, ſaying; *Go*

from

from me now, and come againe another time, *and to morrow*, hereafter *I will giue it thee*. Where in the firſt branch, they include their neighbour with an vncomfortable repulſe: in the ſecond, they require of him a double labour: in the third, they ſhake him off, and illude him with a friuolous promiſe: for ſuch miſers doe ſeldome minde a morrow, or any day enſuing, wherein they propoſe ſeriouſly to ſhew any mercy, but onely make theſe ſemblances and ſhewes, that they might not ſeeme profeſſedly to be churliſh *Nabals*. But ſay that their intent is according to their ſpeeches, yet what know they whether they ſhall liue till the morrow, or then they haue ought to beſtow, or their brethren may euer returne to receiue it. or whether through want of preſent reliefe, his life, health, or ſtate miſcarrie not? And therefore ſaith Saint *Paul*, *Whileſt wee haue opportunity let vs doe good to all, ſpecially to them of the houſhold of faith*. Gal.6.10. And it much comforted *Iob* in his heauie affliction, that he had not *ſuffered the eyes of the widowes to faile*. Iob.31.16. And this is the praiſe of Gods bountifull goodneſſe to his people, and creatures, that *he giueth them all their meate in due ſeaſon*. Pſal.145.15. But withall the Wiſeman doth explicate his owne meaning, and ſheweth in what caſe he doth forbid this manner of dimiſſion with procraſtination: *When thou haſt it by thee*, if thou be able to ſatisfie him, in granting his requeſt, otherwiſe not: For many may doe that to morrow, which they cannot to day, and want meanes to performe that now, which in time to come they may well accompliſh: and for ſuch it is not vnlawfull to reſerue themſelues for a fitter ſeaſon; neither will it be amiſſe for them to make a faithfull promiſe of their future benignity, both to refreſh the heart of their afflicted brother with the teſtimonie of their loue, and to binde themſelues to the more certaine performance of it.

Verſ.29. **Deuiſe not euill againſt thy neighbour that dwelleth ſecurely with thee.* * Tacharaſh.

HAuing proued it to be needfull that we doe all good offices ſeaſonably to our neighbours, hee dehorteth on the contrary

contrary side from doing any iniurie to them, which in it selfe is vniust and sinfull, and yet is made the more grieuous by circumstances. As first, in respect of the manner thereof, if it bee purposely, and perpensedly practised against them: for sundry vices doe conspire together in that worke, as malice, craft, voluntarie iniquitie, and wilfull contempt of Gods Commandements: and herein the principall faculties of the soule are euilly occupied: as affections, wit, and mind, with the abuse of the tongue, and corporall members also: for the word signifieth such industrie and paines taking, such art and trauel, as is wont to be vsed in the tilling of the land, & plowing of the ground. Against the hainousnesse of this offence, *Micah* denounceth a iudgement, saying, *Woe be to them that imagine mischiefe, and worke wickednesse on their beds: when the morning is light they practise it, because power is in their hand.* And *Eliphaz* obserued it to haue been the bane and vndoing of many whom he chargeth to be agents of, and accessarie to their owne destruction in this manner: *I haue seene, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickednesse, reape the same.* Secondly, it is aggrauated by the subiects, the persons wronged, against whom this mischiefe is plotted, *thy neighbour that dwelleth with thee*, if they bee our friends that depend on our loue, and rest in an opinion of our faithfulnesse towards them, or at least are without feare, that any vnfaithfulnesse, trecherie, or perfidious designes should proceed from vs. *Iudasses* are to be reckoned among the worst sort of people, which will both kisse a man, and betray him at one time, with the same mouth. Nothing troubled *Dauid* more in the extremitie of all his troubles, then the indigne behauiour of *Achitophel*, a dissembling, fained, and counterfeite companion; and therefore letting passe the open violence and malice of his professed foes, hee taketh most to heart, and most bitterly complaineth of the most horrible falshood of that most faithlesse hypocrite. *Surely* (saith he) *mine enemie did not defame me, for I could haue borne it; neither did mine enemy exalt himselfe against me: But it was thou O man, my guide, and my familiar, which delightedst in consulting together, and went into the house of God as companions.*

Micah 2. 1.

Iob 4. 8.

Psal. 55. 12. 13. 14.

Vers. 30.

Verſe 30. *Striue not with a man without a cauſe, if hee haue done thee no harme.*

AS the practiſe and attempt of all hurt againſt others is to be auoided, according as the word *euill* indefinitly forbidden, doth implie; ſo we haue a more perticular admonition to take heede of contentions, ſpecially when we be not compelled by iniuries offered, to maintaine our owne righteous cauſes, or to puniſh, or repreſſe ſinne in others, but ſhall contrary to loue, peace, neighbourhood, and equitie moleſt and diſquiet harmeleſſe and innocent perſons. Hereby doth *Eſay* exaggerate the tyrannie, and due puniſhment of thoſe which oppreſſe the Church, and Gods righteous ſeruants: *Woe to thee that ſpoileſt, and thou waſt not ſpoiled: and dealeſt treacherouſly, and they dealt not treacherouſly with thee: when thou ſhalt ceaſe to ſpoile, thou ſhalt be ſpoiled; and when thou ſhalt make an end to deale treacherouſly, they ſhall deale treacherouſly with thee.* Iſai. 33. 1.

And this inhumanitie is yet more inhumane, if they be accuſed, and moleſted, that deſerue well at ones hand, and haue their loue and kindnes requited with indignitie, and aboue al, if they bee purſued and oppreſſed for their graces, for their goodneſſe, for their ſeruices to God, and well doing. Now theſe words containe no warrant for priuate reuenge, or wreaking our anger on euery one who giueth vs iuſt occaſion of offence: for the aggrauation of a greater ſinne, is not an approbation of a leſſe: it is an intollerable crueltie to vexe the innocent, and it is a ſinfull part alſo to bee reuenged on our faultie enemies. In the meane while no law of God nor man doth forbid to expoſtulate either publikly or priuately before the Magiſtrate, with him that hath wronged vs, yea to conuince him of iniurie (if we bee able) prouided that it bee done moderatly, mildly, with hatred of ſinne, and that it may be reformed, and in mercie to the ſinner that hee may bee reclaimed.

Verſe 31. *Ennie not the oppreſſor, and chuſe none of his waies.*

BEcauſe the premiſed precepts and promiſes are the leſſe regarded, by meanes of the hie proſperity of impious perſons that contemne them, and of the deepe aduerſitie of godly men which obſerue them, hee therefore in the concluſion of this Chapter deſcribeth the contrary eſtates and conditions of them both, not as they ſeeme vnto ſenſe, but as they now are, and in time ſhall appeare more plainly to be in truth. And hereunto he maketh a way by diſſwading good men from diſtemper, diſcouragements, and diſorder at the ſight of wicked and cruell mens fortunate ſucceſſes. *Ennie not the oppreſſor*, viz. Let not the abundance, or promotion of them that are giuen to violence, inſolencie, or impietie, grieue, or diſquiet thy hart, though it be no eaſie matter for good men to behold the ſame without vexation: *and chuſe none of his waies*, be not allured by his example (how well ſoeuer he ſucceedeth) to follow him in the ſame ſteps.

Although the ſecond clauſe be annexed to the former, as a ſecond exhortation, yet it carrieth the force of an argument from the effects: becauſe this kind of emulation, if it proceed without controlement, is wont to worke much paſſion at the firſt, and to draw men to imitation at the laſt. Wherefore *Dauid* giuing the ſame caueat, doth ſeeke in like manner to preuent the ſame miſchiefe. *Fret not thy ſelfe for the wicked: neither be ennious for the euill doers. Fret not thy ſelfe, becauſe of the man that proſpereth in his way, becauſe of the man that brings wicked deuices to paſſe. Ceaſe from anger, forſake wrath: Fret not thy ſelfe in any wiſe to doe euill.* And whether it bee *Dauid*, or *Aſaph* that wrote the ſeuentie third Pſalme, the Prophet (whoſoeuer he was) teſtifieth by his own experience, what force there is in bad mens proſperitie to trouble good mens mindes, and how perilous this trouble is to peruert their waies. *My feete* (ſaith he) *were almoſt gone: For I was ennious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperitie of the wicked.*

Pſal. 37. 1. 7. 8.

Pſal. 73. 1. 2.

Verſe

Verſe 32. *For the froward is an abomination to the Lord: and his ſecret is with the righteous.*

HE maketh it to appeare by good reaſon that there is no cauſe why wicked men ſhould be enuied, nor ſafetie in conforming our ſelues to their example, foraſmuch as froward perſons, and ſuch as peruerſely goe on in their crueltie, and other wicked courſes, reiecting al admonition to the contrarie, are an *abomination to the Lord*, abhorred extremely, and perfectly hated of him. For he ſets it downe in the abſtract to declare that hee hath them in full deteſtation. It is not ſaid, they are abominable, but abomination it ſelfe, as odious as may be, and ſuch as are loathſome to looke vpon. *Moſes* his ſpeech to *Pharaoh* doth declare what affections, and effects the ſight of any abomination is apt to worke: *Loe, ſhall we ſacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before them, and they not ſtone vs?* Exod.8. Now who ſeeth not the moſt lamentable caſe, and deſperate miſery of thoſe with whom the Lord is ſo highly offended, be their externall wealth and aduancement neuer ſo great? A Kings implacable anger bringeth downe the greateſt ſubiects, as wretched *Haman* felt; and who then would admire him that liueth, and is like to dye in the moſt grieuous diſpleaſure and indignation of the liuing God? Againſt theſe he ſetteth the ſtate of the godly, that he hath them in eſtimation, and is much delighted with them, as the effects of his fauour doe ſhew. *His ſecret is with the righteous.* His hidden counſels, eſpecially touching their owne ſaluation, the hidden and myſticall knowledge of his will (which an naturall man cannot attaine vnto, as S. *Paul* witneſſeth) is by his word and ſpirit reueiled vnto them, and ſo it is not to his enemies, or to any whom he hath not choſen for friends, according to our Sauiour his owne teſtimonie: *Henceforth I call you no more ſeruants, for the ſeruant knoweth not what his maſter doth, but I call you friends. For all things which I haue heard of my father, I make knowne to you.* Ioh.15.15. And the ſame doth *Dauid* commend as an honourable prerogatiue, wherewith God

vseth to grace his faithfull seruants, how meane or contemptible soeuer they seeme to be in the world. *The secret of the Lord is with them that feare him: and his couenant to giue them vnderstanding.* Psal.25.14.

Verse 33. *The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked: but his blessing on the habitation of the righteous.*

HE confirmeth the former position by the effects of his hatred and loue on both sides: *The curse of the Lord*, his plagues and iudgements are threatned, and prepared, and in time shall bee executed *vpon the house of the wicked*; though it be neuer so stately a palace, *but his blessing*, his promise, his grace, and good prouidence *is vpon the habitation of the righteous*, though it be neuer so base a cottage: where, by house and habitation, hee vnderstandeth the dwelling, the state, the waies, and persons belonging to them.

Verse 34. *Surely he scorneth the scorners: but giueth grace to the lowly.*

THe former sentences declared the seuerity of God against all kinde of sinfull men; but in this is shewed what a speciall quarrell he hath against iesters, scoffers, and mockers, at his word, and admonitions, those hellish Atheists which deride his ordinances, and serueth them in their kinde, both because of all others they are most arrogant, and presumptuous, and none doe so much vilifie and despite him, as they doe, and for that they bee pestilent and plaguie persons, causing others also to thinke basely of Gods most glorious and sacred Oracles; and therefore *hee scorneth them*, requiteth them their owne measure, and returneth that vpon themselues, which they can but offer and attempt against him: they would haue his name to be contemned, hee makes them and theirs to bee abhorred, they desire to bring his worship into reproch, hee doth fill their faces full of shame: hee laugheth at their ruine and destruction which is comming vpon them: he laugheth

at their terrours, cries and rorings when they are in their torments; when they would ſeeke him, hee turneth his face from them; when they ſtand in need of faith and repentance, hee keepeth it away, and withſtands them. And to theſe are oppoſed humble men, which demeane themſelues in a contrary manner: for they ſcoffe not at the words of God, as theſe ſcorners doe in their pride, but with feare and reuerence, hearken to it, feare and obey it, wherefore alſo they finde contrary ſucceſſe, God teſtifying his loue vnto them, and eſpeciall regard of them, by working grace in their hearts, with his holy ſpirit, which hath euer been an infallible pledge of his fauour. Saint *Iames* declareth the meanes whereby men become ſcorners, and that is, by being proud; and likewiſe teacheth after what ſort the Lord doth ſcorne them, namely, by detaining of grace from them, which doth argue his hatred and diſpleaſure, and therefore ſo frameth he the oppoſition: *God reſiſteth the proud and giues grace to the humble.* Iam.4.6.

Verſ.35. *The wiſe ſhall inherit glory, but fooles doe beare away ſhame.* Merim.

BEcauſe humble men are accounted ſimple, and proud men wiſe; and ſinne bringeth many to preferment, and grace occaſioneth diuers to be deſpiſed in the world; hee therefore to raiſe vp the diſcouraged hearts on the one ſide, and to take downe the inſolent mindes of the other, doth pronounce the lowly and godly to be wiſe, and the proud, ſcornefull, and wicked to be fooles: and that theſe wiſe ſhall haue an anſwerable honour, as thoſe that be riſing and in way to promotion, and ſuch fooles ſhall haue a proportionable contempt, as ſuch as be falling, and in the ſtate of ignominie. *The wiſe ſhall inherit glory, viz.* enioy praiſe, and eſtimation in due ſeaſon, when they come to their yeeres, though for a while, during the time of their nonage they liue obſcurely, and ſuſtaine many reproches, and when they haue it, they ſhall keepe it, and vſe it as their owne, as free-holders their inheritances which are lawfully deſcended to them, whereas the applauſe and promotions

of the wicked are but borrowed, or stollen, and therefore of no continuance with them. The possession of this glory is of many taken in the earth, the hearts and tongues of men honouring them in this life, but the full fruition there of shall bee in heauen, and that perfectly, and perpetually, with the fulnesse of all other felicity. Contrariwise, *fooles doe beare away shame*; wicked sinners play the fooles egregiously, taking vp for their portion, (as the word doth well signifie) and voluntarily chusing *shame*, those things which will bring them to shame and reproch; as their pride, their pompe, their carnall excellency will doe either amongst men in earth, or before the iudgement seate of Christ in the day of the Lord. This exaltation of the godly, with other sundry blessings, and the confusion of the wicked, with many sorts of calamities the Prophet *Isaiah* doth confirme: *Behold, my seruants shall eate, and ye shall be hungry: behold, my seruants shall drinke, but ye shall be thirsty? behold, my seruants shall reioyce, and ye shall be ashamed: behold, my seruants shall sing for ioy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and howle for vexation of spirit: and ye shall leaue your name for a curse to my chosen: for the Lord shall slay thee, and call his seruants by a new name.*

Isa. 65. 13. 14. 15.

CHAPTER. IIII.

Vers. 1. *Heare O ye children, the instruction of a father, and giue eare to vnderstanding.*

IN this Chapter *Salomon* confirmeth the same which he had handled in the former Chapters. And herein he exhorteth his readers to hearken to his lessons, and carefully get, keep, and make much of the heauenly wisedome of God, to the fourteenth verse. Secondly, he dehorteth from the society and practise of wicked men, to the twentieth verse. Thirdly, he giueth an admonition, not onely to imbrace his instructions,

ſtructions, but alſo to vſe them to the gouernment of their hearts, ſpeeches, and all manner of behauiour, to the end of the Chapter. And in all theſe hee deliuereth little or nothing by precept, which he doth not alſo approue to them by reaſon.

To the end that hee might the better win the affections of his ſcholers, and challenge not onely attention to heare him, which hee expreſly requireth, but obedience to his words, which by conſequence is inferred, hee beginneth his ſpeech with a preface, and therein mentioneth the relation that is betweene him and his ſcholers, how they comming to learne are become his children, and hee appointed by God to teach ſuſtaineth the perſon of a father, and accordingly giueth fatherly inſtructions proceeding from loue, and deliuered with authority.

Verſ. 2. *For I doe giue good doctrine*, therefore *forſake not my law*.

ALthough thoſe perſonal reſpects might be of good force to moue them, yet he thinketh it not enough to vrge his owne iuriſdiction, or their duty for loyalty, but produceth other arguments to ſhew the equity of his demand: as one is the excellency of the matter, which hee doth propoſe vnto them: *I doe giue you a good doctrine*, that which is wholeſome, pleaſant, and profitable to an vpright heart: it is not heretical, erronious, ſeditious, wanton, or any infectious or dangerous diſcourſe: it is no common, triuiall, or worthleſſe pamphlet: it is no fancie of mans braine, or ſuperſtitious tradition of fleſh and blood, but that which is ſound and fruitfull, for mind, hart, manners, ſtate and gouernment: I vtter noble and diuine ſentences, which bring preſent conſolation, and inueſteth men with eternall felicity. Hereupon he forbiddeth vs to *forſake his law*, in minde, in profeſſion, or in practiſe. For who that is well in his wits will reiect or neglect a thing ſo good, ſo delightfull, ſo profitable, ſo comfortable, and the ſame ſo freely offered.

Vers. 3. *For I was the sonne of my father, tender and only beloued in the sight of my mother.*

THe example and testimony of *Dauid* is brought as a second reason for the warrant of his teaching, & the goodnesse of his doctrine; for he dealeth with them no otherwise then his owne father dealt with him; and looke what doctrine himselfe had receiued of so kinde an instructor, the same also he faithfully deliuered for their instruction. In this verse he acknowledgeth his parents louing affection: In the next hee relateth his fathers wholesome precepts. *For I was the sonne of my father*, whom he most dearely and entirely affected aboue the rest of his children, *Only beloued in the sight of my mother*, whose heart was so much knit vnto mee, as if shee had had no other sonne, and therefore could seldome endure me to be out of her presence, although she had borne other sonnes also, as appeareth, 1. Chron. 3. 5. But what meaneth *Salomon* by this? why doth hee publish to the world how dearely his parents affected him? Because he would haue it knowne that their great loue was a principall cause of his good education; and that therfore he was well taught, because he was much set by. And bearing the same good will to his spirituall children, as his father did to him, hee would imitate his father by testifying his loue in giuing good counsell.

1. Chron. 3. 5.

Vers. 4. *He taught me also, and said vnto me: Let thine heart retaine my words; keepe my commandements and liue.*

HAuing alleaged the motiues of *Dauids* documents and instructions, the singular loue he bare vnto him; he now beginneth to recite the matter therof, which consisteth of exhortations, dehortations, and promises promiscuously intermingled; and in all these he recommendeth vnto him, and inciteth him vnto the intentiue regard of sound & sauing knowledge: and first, he prepareth him to a serious obseruation of his counsell in this verse, and afterwards deliuereth the particulars of his aduice in those that follow. That his sayings

might

might be of the greater force, and dwell the longer with him, he requireth that they may haue a due manner of acceptance, that the eare be not onely imployed in receiuing of them, but the heart and mind alſo: neither doth it ſuffice that they bee once apprehended, but conſtantly held faſt (as the word ſignifieth) and therfore addeth alſo another clauſe, *keepe my Commandements*, keepe them in memory, keepe them in affection, keepe them in practiſe. Hee maketh a proffer of large extent, and offereth a gift moſt deſireable; namely, *life*, both temporall, and eternall, with all happineſſe belonging to them both: but moſt emphatically ſet downe in the imparatiue moode, *and liue*; wherein he both preſcribeth a duty, and therein giueth direction, and maketh a large promiſe; as if hee ſhould haue ſaid; Be prouident in yeelding obedience to my commandements that thou maieſt liue, and aſſuredly thou ſhalt liue, and that moſt bleſſedly.

Verſ. 5. *Get wiſedome, get vnderſtanding: forget not, neither decline from the words of my mouth.*

HEre he layeth downe the propoſition, and maine point of his whole oration, *Get wiſedome* (ſaith he) *get vnderſtanding, viz.* call, crie, digge, ſearch, and vſe all good meanes for an exquiſite and ſetled knowledge, with the faculty of conceiuing, and diſcerning, whereby thou maieſt bee kept from errours: *forget not*, let no good inſtructions regardleſly ſlip out of thy memorie: *Decline not from the words of my mouth*, breake not through contempt or negligence thoſe precepts and rules wherewith I informe thee, for the attainement and vſage of this heauenly knowledge.

Verſ. 6. *Forſake her not, and ſhe ſhall preſerue thee, loue her, and ſhe ſhall keepe thee.*

BEcauſe as much miſchiefe commeth by caſting off that which is good, as by meere refuſall of it, hee preſſeth the point of perſeuerance, warning his ſonne that he ſhould by no

meanes giue ouer his good beginnings: hee would not haue him *forsake wisedome*, either ceasing to learne it, or desisting from the exercise of it; and allureth him to this good persistance by the benefit of constancy, *she shall preserue thee*, (saith he) shee shall preserue thy heart and mind from sinfull lusts, and other corruptions: she shall keepe thee from the practise of euill behauiour: she shall defend thee from shame and reproch: she shall protect thee from plagues and punishments. Now he teacheth him not onely why he should retaine wisdome, but how he may bee able to doe it, and so receiue preseruation from her; and that is, by setting his delight vpon her, *loue her*, and then *she shall keepe thee*, for no man doth easily depart from the thing which he loueth, but charily layeth vp that which his heart is set vpon, and keepeth it safe with al heedfulnesse. Why doth God eternally preserue his people? because he loueth them. And why do they perpetually cleaue vnto him? because they loue him. *Who* (saith Saint *Paul*) *shall*
Rom.8.35. *separate vs from the loue of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, &c.* That in the Canticles is not impertinent to this
Cant.8.6. purpose; *Set me as a seale on thy heart; for loue is strong as death; ielousie is cruell as the graue, the coales thereof are fierie coales; many waters cannot quench loue, if a man would giue all the substance of his house to buy loue, hee would vtterly despise it.*

Vers.7. *Wisedome is the chiefe thing*, therefore *get wisdome, and with all thy getting get vnderstanding.*

THat he may the stronglier confirme his admonitions going last before, and the more directly inferre this exhortation ensuing, he extolleth wisedome with due and deserued praise, ascribing to it the principall place of excellency, and preferring it before all things in the world, as *Salomon* proued by comparison in the former chapter; and then it followeth that it must needs be worth getting, worth keeping, worth louing, &c. and therefore hee had good reason also to perswade him *with all his possessions* to compasse it, that hee should

ſhould vſe all opportunities, and commodities, and whatſoeuer he enioyed, as a meanes to further him in knowledge, and to haue nothing in ſuch eſtimation, though it bee neuer ſo deere vnto him, as not to depart with it for the encreaſe of grace, and exerciſe of goodneſſe, if otherwiſe hee cannot obtaine the one, or performe the other. For hee cannot haue a hard match that makes a purchaſe of vertue, how great ſoeuer the price be that he payeth for it, becauſe euery parcell of it ouerualueth all the moſt delectable things of the world: it is that treaſure which he that found, is cómended by our Sauiour for ſelling all that he hath to purchaſe the field wherein it was hidden: and it is that *rich pearle*, which the wiſe *Merchant* did well to buy with the ſale of all that he had. Pſal.13.44.45.

Verſ. 8. *Exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee: ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour, when thou doeſt imbrace her.*

Verſ. 9. *She ſhall giue to thine head an ornament of grace, a crowne of glory ſhall ſhe deliuer thee.*

HAuing gotten her, though it coſt him deere, he requireth that he vſe her well, by making much of her, and extolling her, which is done by a reuerent and honourable entertainment of her: for ſo hee explicateth himſelfe, in conditioning that ſhee bee *imbraced*, which is done when the word is receiued, as *the word of God*; when the Miniſters are reſpected, as the meſſengers of God: when obedience is yeelded as to the voice of God: when ſhe is magnified with a wholeſome tongue, and glorified with a godly life. And to him that ſhall performe this duty, he ſheweth how ſhee will requite it with her fauours, ſaying; *ſhe ſhall promote thee*, either to a earthly dignity, or to a heauenly. (For that which God ſaith, God in wiſedome ſaith, *Them that honour me, I honour.*) And *Salomon* found it verified in both, and that in ample and large meaſure, *ſhee ſhall giue to thine head an ornament of grace*, and ſet vpon thine head a bleſſed crowne, as Chap.1.9. 1.Theſ.2.13. Gal.4.14. 1.Sam.2.30.

Verſ 10. *Heare O my ſonne and receiue my words, and the yeeres of thy life ſhall be many.*

Verſ. 11. *I doe teach thee in the way of wiſedome, and leade thee in the right pathes,*

HItherto (as it ſeemeth) *Salomon* hath related the words of his father *Dauid*, produced by way of teſtimonie, both to eſtabliſh the hearts of his auditors, or readers, and to iuſtifie his owne doctrine, which hee had, and doth communicate vnto them, for that *Dauid*, ſo worthy a perſon, did out of his affection ſo counſell him, as hee aduiſed them, and now proceedeth in his owne words, or rather in the words of God, ſuggeſted vnto him, and written by him, for the vſe of his children, to whom hee ſpeaketh in the firſt verſe of this chapter, hauing begun his ſpeech in the plurall number, as ſpeaking to all, in this and thoſe following, he continueth in the ſingular, as if hee would direct his ſpeech to euery perticular. The matter which hee handleth is not new, but a renuing of that which he had formerly deliuered, which he doth, to auerre the ſoundneſſe, the vtility, and the neceſſity of it: the precept for hearing was deliuered chapter the firſt, verſe the eighth: the duty of receiuing inſtruction was required chapter 2. verſ. 1. the promiſe of long life hath been made, chapter 3. verſe 2. and 16 the teſtimony alſo of his inſtruction was giuen in the ſecond verſe of this chapter, ſauing that there hee vttered it more generally, and here he doth it more ſpecially; there ſimply, and here tropically, and in a briefe allegorie, comparing his reader to a traueller, himſelfe to a guide, and Gods word to the way: there he ſaith, *I giue you a good doctrine*, and here, *I doe teach thee in the way of wiſedome, and leade thee in the right pathes.* My ſayings, with the reſt of the Scriptures duly obſerued, are able to make thee wiſe to ſaluation, *being profitable for doctrine, for reproofe, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſſe, that thou maieſt be perfect, and throughly furniſhed to all good workes.*

2. Tim. 3. 15. 16.

Verſ. 12.

Verſe 12. *When thou goeſt, thy ſteps ſhall not be ſtraitned, and when thou runneſt, thou ſhalt not ſtumble.*

BEfore he commended his doctrine for the wholeſomnes, equitie, and goodneſſe of it, and now for the fruite and happie ſucceſſe which it cauſeth, it make our courſe of life comfortable, and free from perill, euen then when wee ſeeme to be in moſt hazzard; which argument hath been erſt produced, and is now repeated: but with ſome addition, and further amplification, then was before in the third chap. verſ. 23. it was ſaid, *Thou ſhalt walke by the way ſafely, and thy foote ſhall not ſtumble.* And now that ſafetie with eaſineſſe adioyned to it is argued, and illuſtrated elegantly by an allegory, *when thou goeſt, thy ſteps ſhall not be ſtraitned* but thy path ſhall be broad enough without ſtraining of thy foote, or ſlipping beſide: which miſchiefe befalleth thoſe which goe ouer bridges, or vpon ſteepes, or in ſuch like paſſages and places which are too narrow. And this he doth yet further enlarge by way of gradation, ſaying, *When thou runneſt, thou ſhalt not ſtumble:* To goe ſurely without danger of ſtumbling, though but a ſoft pace is a good thing; but to runne ſwiftly without harme is a harder and happier matter, ſeeing that hee that maketh much haſte ſeeth not the perill that is before him: and yet this is the bleſſed condition of all thoſe that walke in the way of wiſedome, partly becauſe they haue the Lord himſelfe to be their guide and keeper, and partly becauſe *hee hath giuen his Angels charge ouer them, to keepe them in all their waies: and they ſhall beare them vp in their hands, leſt they daſh their feete againſt a ſtone.* Pſal. 91. 12. But our Sauiours ſaying in the Goſpell may ſeeme to contradict this Scripture, as contrary vnto it: for hee affirmeth that *the way that leadeth to life it ſtraite, and the gate narrow*, &c. For anſwere vnto which obiection, obſerue that Chriſt ſpeaketh there, of the exerciſe of godlineſſe and religion, which is ſtrict, and not ſo broad as fleſhly mens luſts and appetites do deſire; and therefore they that will paſſe through the ſame vnto heauen, muſt reſtraine themſelues from the exceſſiue

ceſſiue libertie of ſinne by mortification, and containe their affections and behauiour within the compaſſe of Gods holie will: and heere *Salomon* declareth the effects and reward of godlineſſe and religion, that God doth protect them, and make their paths wide and broad before them, for conſolation and ſafetie.

Verſe 13. *Take hold of inſtruction, let* her *not goe: keepe her, for ſhe is thy life.*

HEre wee haue an end of the firſt point of this Chapter, which as he entred into with the teſtimonie and authoritie of his father, ſo hee alſo concludeth almoſt in his words: for there is no materiall difference betweene this, and the fourth verſe of this preſent chapter. Wherein hee ſaith, *Let thine heart retaine, or hold faſt my words: keepe my commandements, and liue:* which in ſenſe accordeth with this text, *Take hold* of inſtruction, let her not goe: keepe her, for ſhe is thy life. The ſame precept in effect is giuen here, and there, that we perſiſt conſtantly in goodneſſe. The reaſon is for ſubſtance the ſame in both places, though in the one it be alleaged as a promiſe, *liue thou*, or *thou ſhalt liue:* in this other there is a ſecret threatning mingled with the promiſe, and ſo they iointly intimate the wonderfull benefit of perſeuerance, and the extreme perill of reuolting, *ſhe is thy life*, if in preſeruing of her thou doeſt keepe that which of all other things is the moſt precious, euen thy very life, thy ſpirituall life, thy eternall life: but if thou be remiſſe, and careleſſe of her, if thou reiect and caſt her off, nothing can counteruaile thy damage, thou departeſt with the prime of all thy poſſeſſions, thou deſtroyeſt thy ſelfe, thou loſeſt thy life for euer.

Verſe 14. *Enter not into the path of wicked men, neither walk in the way of euill men.*

Verſe 15. *Auoid it, paſſe not by it, turne from it: paſſe away.*

FOr as much as not onely the companie, but the conuerſation of lewd perſons is contagious, and noiſome, and therfore

fore their example is pernitious, and peſtilent, he therefore aduertiſeth thoſe which will learne any good of him to take heede of it: and not alone to ſtay proceedings therein, but if it be poſſible, to preuent the beginnings, and not at all to practiſe any of their ſinfull actions, and therefore ſaith he, *Enter not into the way of wicked men*, doe not ſet any foote into their diſorders, and ſinfull courſe of life: for hardly can a man bee reclaimed that hath taſted of the pleaſures and deceitfulnes of ſinne. *Neither walke in the way of euill men*, follow them not in their exorbitant and diſſolute behauiour: *Auoide it*, keepe from it with deteſtation of it, as the word importeth, abhorre it, ſet thy ſelfe againſt it, as thou wouldeſt againſt infection and poyſon: *paſſe by it*, come not nigh it, for feare thou be taken, and enſnared with it: *turne from it*, with all ſpeede poſſible, if thou haſt ſo much as ſet one foote towards it: *paſſe by*, diuert thy courſe another way, and keepe as farre off as thou canſt. In all theſe words he proſecuteth his admonition with ſimilies, taken from trauellers, whoſe wiſedome is to ſhunne all ſuſpected by-pathes, and whatſoeuer places doe threaten any perill vnto them. Saint *Paul* doth agree with *Salomon* not in words, but in meaning, when he warneth the Epheſians to haue *no fellowſhip with the vnfruitfull workes of darkneſſe, but to reproue them rather.* Epheſ. 5. 11.

Verſe 16. *For they ſleep not, vnleſſe they haue done miſchiefe, and their ſleepe is taken away, vnleſſe they cauſe* ſome *to fall.*

Verſe 17. *For they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, and drinke the wine of violence.*

HE confirmeth his counſell for the abandoning of graceleſſe mens practiſes by reaſons: whereof one is taken from the vehement deſire which wicked men haue to commit wickedneſſe, and that is ſuch as through vexation *cannot ſleep*, vnleſſe they either doe ſome hurt themſelues, or cauſe others either to doe, or receiue harme: their greedy appetite for working miſchiefe is like to a hungrie mans ſtomacke which is emptie of foode, who going ſupperleſſe to bed can take no reſt,

reſt, his belly doth thinke his throte is cut (as wee ſay in our prouerbe) and therefore will not ſuffer him to enioy his ſleep. Experience wee haue of this in *Achab*, who was ſicke with griefe, and indignation, that hee could not compaſſe *Naboths* vineyard. And ſuch a rauenous deſire of villany wee reade to haue been in *Ammon*, who pined away with ſorrow vntill hee could haue his purpoſe to ſatisfie his luſt vpon his ſiſter *Thamar*. So hath hee made their violent affections to accompliſh euill, to appeare by the effects thereof. Now doth hee ſhew the cauſe from whence they proceed, and that is the great delight which they haue in naughtineſſe, which is declared by a compariſon of the like, namely, of bread, and wine, meaning thereby all other food alſo. *They eate the bread of wickednesse, and drinke the wine of violence*, viz. their ſinne is meate and drink vnto them, and they take as much contentment in playing lewd prankes, as Epicures doe in feaſting.

1. King. 21. 4.

Verſe 18. *For the path of the iuſt is like the ſhining light that ſhineth more vnto the perfect day.*

Verſe 19. *The way of the wicked is a darkneſſe, they know not whereat they ſhall ſtumble.*

IT appeareth by the cauſall, *for*, that an exhortation to walk in the way of good men, is as well vnderſtood, as the dehortation from walking in the paths of euill men, is expreſſed, becauſe hee ſtrengthneth both by an argument taken from the contrary condition of both ſorts. He compareth the way, or the life and ſtate of the godly to the *light*, which in the Scripture ſignifieth knowledge, grace, ſafetie, comfort, and honour. Contrariwiſe, the life, and ſtate of the wicked is like to darknes, full of ignorance, contempt, perill, horrors, and all kinde of miſeries. Now to light, *viz.* the happineſſe of the *righteous*, is promiſed a growth, and increaſe: the beginning is like the dawning of the day, and the proceeding, as a fierie ſun-ſhine morning, and the fulnes, and perfection which is perpetuall, and without declining, is like a noonetide, or the midſt of a Summers day. And likewiſe on the contrarie ſide, the degrees

of

of wicked mens courſes and miſeries are alſo intended, albeit they be not expreſſely mentioned: they are like the darkneſſe of an euening, which waxeth blacker and blacker, euen vntill midnight, whereof it is that they ſhall fall into ſnares, & pits, ſooner, or later, moſt certainly; but where or when they know not. The one ſort therefore begin their iourney at day breaking, and ſo haue a little mixture of darkneſſe at the firſt, and finiſh it at midday: the other ſet forward about Sun-ſetting, and ſo ſee ſomewhat while it is twilight, and ſtumble on till midnight, and then rather breake their neckes, then come to the end of their iourney.

Verſe 20. *My ſonne, attend to my words, incline thine eare to my ſayings.*

Verſe 21. *Let them not depart from thine eyes, keepe them in the midſt of thine heart.*

THe more important any ſeruice is, the more ſubiect commonly men are to the neglect of it, and the ſooner grow to remiſnes in it: and that cauſeth the wiſe man ſo often to call for attention, as wee finde in the beginning of euery part of this Chapter this charge to be vrged, that his ſonne ſhould heare, and hearken, and hold faſt, and keepe, &c. This dutie therefore wee ſee here againe required: *My ſonne,* (ſaith he) *attend to my words, and ſayings,* &c. Hearken diligently to the things that I ſhall ſpeake, and vtter in my words and ſayings: *Let them not depart from thine eyes,* viz. let them not be forgottē, for we beſt remember thoſe things that be in our ſight. See chap. 3. 21. *Keepe them in the midſt of thine heart,* viz. hide them deeply and ſurely in thy minde. See chap. 2. 1.

Verſe 22. *For they are life to them that finde them, and health to all their fleſh.*

A Promiſe is as hardly beleeued, as a precept obeyed: and therefore as hee ſaw it expedient to inculcate the one, ſo he findeth cauſe to reiterate the other; as here we ſee he doth,

both

both for the eternall felicitie of euery one which embraceth the counsell of wisedome, and his temporarie welfare. Touching the former, hee saith, his sayings *are life to them that finde them*, as hee said before, chapter 3. 22. *they* shall be life to thy soule: touching the latter he saith, *they shall be health to all thy flesh*, shall preserue in health, and safetie of thy bodie, so farre, and so long as it shall be good for thee; and vnder the same he comprehendeth all other earthly blessings which are giuen for the vse of the body, and cheerefulnes of the minde, and the comfortable condition of this present life. For it is euident that here is a *Metonymia* of the effect for the cause, and a *Synecdoche*, one benefit being promised for many.

Verse 23. *Aboue all keeping, keepe thy heart: for out of it are the issues of life.*

THe two former verses are an introduction to this, and to the other foure remaining, wherein are prescriptions for a holy and vertuous life: this requiring a strict care for the gouerning of the inward man, and those containing instructions for the ordering of the outward man. The Lord knoweth that the hart of man (and so the whole soule, for the which the heart is put (being a most noble and principall part of the same) is subiect to manifold assaults and temptations from the diuell, and the world, and to many deceiueable lusts, and traiterous corruptions within it selfe, and therefore chargeth that it be well looked vnto, and kept with watch and ward: and the extent of this heedfulnes hee setteth foorth by comparison that it bee more intensiue, and serious, then any others, then for house, then for money, then for bodily safetie, then for naturall life: no perill is so certaine, as the danger of that: no hurt is so fearefull, as the wounding of that: no losse is so grieuous, as the spoyle of that. And therefore to make it appeare that he is not so earnest without a cause, he rendreth a reason for his admonition, *for out of it are the issues of life*. All our actions good or bad, proceed from the heart, as the fountaine from whence all the behauiour springeth, and the roote

from

from whence it groweth: although vpright hearted men haue their frailties, and fall into ſome faults, yet they are not imputed to them for parts of their life: and notwithſtanding men of wicked hearts doe ſome good offices, and performe many actions that are profitable to others, yet they are not eſteemed from the ſtreames that flow from their ſoules, or any good fruit that they bring forth: *for a good man, out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things: and an euill man, out of the euill treaſure of his heart bringeth forth euill things.* For as our Sauiour ſaith, *that out of the heart proceed euil thoughts, murthers, fornications, theſts, falſe witneſſe, blaſphemie*: ſo alſo is it to be vnderſtood, that thence do flow holy meditations, chaſtity, purity, mercy, liberality, true teſtimonies, and gratious ſpeeches. Mat.12.35. Mat.15.19.

Verſ. 24. *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and put peruerſe lips farre from thee.*

IN giuing direction for outward carriage, he beginneth with the words and ſpeeches, which are declared by the cauſe and inſtruments of them, the *mouth* and *lips*, where all peruerſeneſſe, frowardneſſe, and naughtineſſe of what kind ſoeuer, againſt the firſt or ſecond table is forbidden. And this he putteth in this place, becauſe of all duties next to the ruling of the heart, the guiding of the tongue is moſt neceſſary and difficult. And therefore Saint *Iames* ſaith, *He that can bridle his tongue is a perfect and compleat man.* And yet ſo expedient it is, as that he that ſeemeth to be religious, and refraineth not his tongue, *his religion is in vaine.* The metaphors which hee vſeth do carrie the force of reaſons; implying vnſauory and ſinfull communication to bee odious and hurtfull, as thoſe of abandoning and caſting farre off, for ſo we deale with things that are venomous, contagious, and loathſome to the eye, and ſmell, or other ſenſes: and likewiſe the Epithete, froward or peruerſe doth intimate, that a man is as much deformed by his leaud talking, as by a wry mouth. Iam.3. Iam.1.26.

Verſ.25.

Verſ.25. *Let thine eyes looke right on, and let thine eye lids looke ſtraight before thee,*

AS the tongue is well to be gouerned for the words, ſo are the eyes for their aſpects, and lookes, and conſequently all the reſt of the ſenſes, with the inſtruments thereof. *Let thine eyes looke right on, &c.* let them not wander, nor looke a ſquint, but directly to that which is good, and iuſt. It is a borrowed ſpeech taken from ſuch as hold the plow, or doe ſuch other worke, who muſt looke right forward, and not on either ſide, much leſſe backward: or from trauellers, or runners in a race, whom it concerneth not to gaze about, looking here and there, but diligently to attend vpon their way, or the races end. It is requiſite to take heed to the eyes, as to the windowes of the minde, or brokers of the heart, which may procure good motions and deſires, or poyſon the ſoule with worldly, wanton, vnchaſt, proud, enuious, or other corrupt cogitations. By the abuſe of this ſenſe, and that of hearing, ſinne firſt entred into the world, and by the ſame taketh occaſion to diſperſe her venome, and bring men daily to deſtruction.

Verſ. 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy waies be ordered aright.*

IT is the familiar cuſtome of the Scripture to call the actions of mens liues by the name of their waies, or the paths of their feet, as Pſalm. 119. *Thy word is a lampe to my feet, and a light to my pathes:* And, *I thought on my waies, and turned my feet to thy teſtimonies.* And in that ſenſe we are to conceiue of them in this place, ſo that hee informeth all men what to doe, and how to walke in a Chriſtian conuerſation; wherein hee requireth both warineſſe, and ſtrictneſſe, and to that end hee commandeth vs to *ponder the path of our feet*, by weighing our workes in a ballance, to aſſure our ſelues that there be nothing too much, nor nothing too little, and as farre as is poſſible, to auoide all extremities both of exceſſe, and defect, that wee may keepe due meaſure in euery thing wee take in hand, which

Pſal.119.105. & 59.

which must be done by the rule of certaine warrant, and not by opinion, or coniecture. The latter clause is an explication of the former, when he saith, *Let al thy waies be ordered aright*, haue an eye that not one of thy works alone, or a few be done in such manner as is fit, but that euery of them be rightly guided by the prescript of holy wisdome, and Gods sacred word. This saying is agreeable to that of Saint *Peter*, *As hee that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conuersation:* 1. Pet. 1. 15. and to that of Saint *Paul*, *Whatsoeuer things are true, whatsoeuer things are honest, whatsoeuer things are pure, whatsoeuer things are of good report, if there be any vertue, if there bee any praise, thinke of these things.* Phil. 4. 8.

Vers. 27. *Turne neither to the right hand, nor to the left:* but *thy foot from euill.*

HE insisteth still in the same precept, exacting precise and accurate proceeding in the good way of Gods commandements without diuerting to any by-paths of sinfull lusts, of fleshly reason, of carnall policy, of humane inuentions, of all incitemens from the diuell, or men, or our owne corruptions. This phrase of declining to the right hand, or to the left is frequent in the Scriptures, and forbidden in many places: as, *You shall obserue to doe as the Lord your God commandeth you, and shalt not turne either to the right hand or to the left.* And, *according to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, thou shalt doe, thou shalt not decline from that sentence either to the right hand, or to the left.* Wee must not therefore walke only by measure, but by line, yea by a straight line; Gods truth is the Kings high way, which we are bound to keepe without declining to either side, either with a wicked purpose, or good meaning, either to take vpon vs ought that is not warranted, or to neglect any duty that is commanded: and so we shall *remoue our foot from euill*, by speedy reforming of that wherein we are faulty, and constantly refraining from that which is vnlawfull. Deut. 5. 32. Deut. 17. 11.

CHAPTER. V.

Mezimmoth.

Verſ. 1. *My ſonne, attend to my wiſedome, and bow thine eare to my vnderſtanding.*

Verſ. 2. *That thou maieſt regard diſcretion, and thy lippes keepe knowledge*

AS the former chapter was for the moſt part a confirmation of the third, ſo is this of the principall points of the ſecond, both in ſoliciting men to liſten vnto wiſedome, and demonſtrating the need, and vſe thereof for the ſhunning of ſubtill and pernitious harlots; and therefore according to his wonted manner, he firſt prefixeth a briefe exhortation, as a proeme, or preface before his diſcourſe, and then dilateth more largely on the matter in hand, euen that ſubiect which he hath chiefly choſen to deale in. The former part is an exhortation contained in theſe two verſes; the former whereof (inciting vs to attention) is almoſt word for word agreeable with the ſecond verſe of the ſecond chapter, and the ſecond verſe of the fourth; and the latter propoſeth the end and vſe of this attention, which is firſt in the minde, ſecondly in the mouth. For the minde, he ſaith, *that thou mayeſt regard diſcretion*, the word ſignifieth ſubtill, and wittie thoughts, *viz.* wiſdome, and prudencie, which is gotten by a diligent and ſerious meditation of things to bee ſpoken, or done; and for the mouth, *and thy lips keepe knowledge*. And therefore the drift of all is, as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Stirre vp, and apply thy mind and affections, and lend the outward ſenſes alſo of the body, to the end thou maieſt neither conceiue euill in thy mind, nor willingly heare any euill, or vanity with thine eares, but that thou mayeſt haue the word of God in thy mouth, and thy lips bee fenced againſt the lips of an harlot, which allure vnto leaudneſſe.

Verſ. 3.

Verſ. 3. *Although the lips of a ſtrange woman drop as an honie combe, and her palate is ſmoother then oyle:*

Verſ. 4 *Yet her latter end is bitter as wormewood, as ſharpe as a two edged ſword.*

THe better to preſerue men from this foule and damnable ſinne of adultery, hee doth firſt diſcouer and deſcribe the fallacies, and miſchieuouſneſſe of the filthie harlot, to the ſeuenth verſe.

Secondly, hee admoniſheth to beware how they haue any thing to doe with her, and ſo bring milery on their owne heads, to the 18. verſe.

Thirdly, he preſcribeth a remedie to preuent it, which is the lawfull and honeſt vſe of marriage, and kindneſſe to their owne yoke-fellowes. In theſe verſes, and ſome that follow, the whoriſh woman is very liuely painted forth in her colours, to the end ſhe may bee, not onely the better knowne, but the more deteſted; ſhe is called, *a ſtrange woman*, becauſe ſhe eſtrangeth her ſelfe from God, from her owne husband, from chaſtity, and all goodneſſe; and for what other cauſe, ſee chap. 2. verſ. 16. Her words are very alluring, and full of enticements; the miſery which ſhee draweth men into, is wonderfull loathſome, and painefull, according as the ſimilitudes doe expreſſe. Albeit the naughty womans words are pleaſant to fleſh and blood, in as much as they tickle the ſenſes with promiſe of ioyes and delights, ſo that they may bee compared to the honey combe, which is moſt ſweet to the taſte: and though her ſpeeches are moſt plauſible and ſmooth, ſo that they may be reſembled to oyle which hurts not the tendereſt skinne, but rather ſuppleth it; yet for all this her effects are moſt grieuous to bee borne; ſo that they may bee likened to wormewood, which exceeds in bitternes, and the euils which ſhe brings men to are deadly, ſo that they may bee iuſtly called *a two edged ſword*: for howſoeuer at the beginning ſhee bringeth ſolace and comfort, and telleth that her louer may be ſecure from feare of danger, yet in the end ſhee workes to

him ſhame, beggery, hearts-griefe, deſtruction, and damnation, as after ſhall more plainely appeare.

Verſ. 5. *Her feet goe downe to death: her ſteps take hold on hell.*

AS her lips or her ſpeeches were guilefull, and peſtilent, promiſing ſweet pleaſure, and bringing bitter torments, ſo are her feet, (that is, her goings, and by them is meant her actions, and the reſt of her carriage) moſt noyſome and hurtfull, and goe downe to death, leade to deſtruction, both temporall and eternall: *and her ſteps take hold on hell*, carrie her ſelfe and thoſe that follow her headlong into perdition; as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, both ſhee and her aſſociates are at hels brinke, and are ready vnrecouerably to bee plunged therein: ſee chap. 2. verſ. 18.

Verſ. 6. *Leſt thou ſhouldeſt ponder the path of life, her waies are moueable that thou canſt not know them.*

HE aggrauateth the perill of her misbehauiour by her art and cunning, in cloaking her practiſes: and it ſeemeth to proceed from a ſecond *Prolepſis*, or obiection which might be made by ſuch as ſeeke liberty to conuerſe with her.

Obiect. If ſhe proue ſo dangerous and wicked, I ſhall quickly find her out, and deſcry her life, and crafty ſeducements, and then I ſhall know what I haue to doe, to caſt her off, and forſake her.

Anſw. Her waies are ſo variable, and her diſpoſitiun ſo mutable, and ſhe ſo cunning to transforme her ſelfe into all formes and faſhions, as if thou ſhouldeſt goe about to weigh her actions of life in a ballance, thou ſhouldeſt loſe thy labour, thou wilt be ouerthrowne by her peſtilent inchantments, before thou canſt looke into her villanous deſignes, and wicked courſes. He reſembleth her either to fugitiue malefactors, which run vp and downe, hither and thither vnconſtantly, and ſeeke diuers places to lurke in, ſo that they might not be eaſily apprehended:

hended: or vnto foxes, and badgers, or ſuch like wild beaſts, which haue many haunts, and many holes, and therein many muſes and turnings, by meanes wherof they are hardly taken. Of this her artificiall diſſimulation *Salomon* ſpeaketh in another place, ſaying, *Such is the way of an adulterous woman; ſhe eateth and wipeth her mouth, and ſaith, I haue not committed iniquity.* Prou.30.20.

Verſ.7. *Now children hearken to me, and decline not from the words of my mouth.*

Verſ.8. *Remoue thy way farre from her, and come not neere the doore of her houſe.*

VPon the deſcription of an harlot, hee inferreth a twofold admonition, one generall, and the other ſpeciall: the generall is to imbrace his words, both with attention, and obedience, that men ſhould hearken vnto them, and not turne away from them; and theſe hee oppoſeth as an antidote vnto her enticing allurements. Heere therefore is ſet downe the harlot on the one ſide, and *Salomon*, yea the Lord himſelfe on the other; ſhe ſoliciting to hearken to her, and the Lord perſwading to hearken to him; ſhee ſeducing and leading men to leaudneſſe, and hee rightly informing them, and detecting her leaudneſſe. The ſpeciall drift is to teach vs that we auoide this wretched harlot, whereby is forbidden not onely all vnlawfull, diſhoneſt and vnſeemely company with her, gazing on her, talking with her, &c. but all comming neere to her, and as much as we may, her very ſight and preſence: for gunpowder is no more apt to take fire (if it come neere to it) then our corrupt nature to bee prouoked to this ſinne; and therefore alſo hee would not haue vs to come to *her houſe*, or the place where ſhee is, yea to the very doores of her houſe, becauſe this diſeaſe is ſo dangerous, that the place it ſelfe is full of perill.

Verſ.9. *Leſt thou giue thine honour to another, and thy yeeres to the cruell:*

Verſ.10. *Leſt ſtrangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the houſe of a ſtranger.*

HEre follow the reaſons taken from the diſcommodities following, and flowing from this ſinne:

whereof ſome are { Outward and bodily, verſ.9.10. / Inward, & belong to the mind, v.11.&c.

Of the outward, the firſt is the forfeiture of a mans honour and dignity, which the perſon that defileth himſelfe with vncleanneſſe, doth as it were take from himſelfe, and giue to others, not to enioy (for one cannot duly be honoured by anothers ignominie) but to deface and ſpoile him of it. He doth then thereby expoſe himſelfe, and his eſtimation to obliquie and contempt, that euery one which heareth of his filthy facts, ſhould haue him in deriſion, and deſpiſe him. The latter clauſe of this ſentence doth induce vs to thinke that this is the ſenſe of the former; when hee ſaith, *and thy yeeres to the cruell*, where *giue*, is referred indifferently to both, and it is euident to al, that a mā may take away life from his neighbour, but make no benefit of it to himſelfe, neuer any can poſſibly liue by another mans death: therefore theſe words doe declare the ſecond diſcommodity of whoredome, the endangering of his life, and yeeres that are behinde, *to the cruell, viz.* to any that ſhall fiercely purſue him: her husband, or other friends that are diſhonoured by it, her other louers; her corriuals inflamed with enuie and ſpite; her ſelfe, who ſometimes poyſoneth thoſe which ſhe hath had to doe withall, that ſhe might the more freely proſtitute and giue ouer her ſelfe wholly to others whom ſhe better likes: or the hand of the Magiſtrate, whoſe office it is to cut off adulterers, who ſtirred vp by Gods iudgement, may proue very ſharpe in purſuing of him, and with as great ſeuerity as if he were cruell, though properly for that he is not to be ſo called, but iuſt and righteous. The third is the loſſe of his goods, which in the Hebrew text is called ſtrength, and labour, becauſe thereby he had obtained them; by which tearmes hee doth vpbraid him with

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ſottiſhnes and folly, which would ſo wretchleſly, and ſinfully depart with that whereupon hee beſtowed his ſtrength, and which hee compaſſed not without great paines and trauell. And this is yet further exaggerated by the perſons vpon whom it is conferred, viz. *ſtrangers*, and forrainers, not onely not of his owne blood, or alliance, to whom hee is bound in ſpeciall manner, by the law of good nature, but alſo not of his friends, to whom he oweth the ſecond dutie of kindneſſe. As if he ſhould haue ſaid: Thou ſhalt not only conſume and waſt that patrimony which hath been deſcended vpon thee, or been bequeathed to thee, that neither wife, child, brother, or friend, or thoſe that are neereſt vnto thee, ſhall be the better for it, nor thy ſelfe haue the fruition of it, but ſhall feede, yea inrich ſtrumpets, bawds, ruffians, and ill companions with that which thou haſt got by the toyle and labour of thine hands, and earned dearely with the ſweate of thy browes.

Verſe 11. *And thou mourne at the laſt, when thy fleſh and thy body are conſumed.* Nahamta.

NOw wee come to the inward diſcommoditie, the griefe and vexation of the heart, which this impure behauiour produceth: which is argued partly by the cauſe, and partly by the effects: the cauſe is, *the waſting of his fleſh and body*, which vncleane perſons (if they eſcape death) doe fall into: for beſides that, ordinarily they ſpend their ſtrength, with their goods, and good names, and the hazard of their liues, and become weake and feeble: how many filthy and loathſome diſeaſes doe they fall into that giue themſelues vnto this ſinne: ſome ſo farre, that in the end their very bowels fall out, and there is great force in this argument: for albeit this miſchiefe befall not all adulterers, yet not one can ſecure himſelfe as free from the perill of it. The effects of their griefe are two: firſt, their crying, in this verſe: ſecondly, their complaining, in the three next. Their mourning and crying for the bitternes of it is reſembled to the roring of a lion, for ſo much the word importeth.

Verse 12.13.&c. *And say, How long haue I hated instruction, and my heart despised correction? and haue not obeyed the voyce of my teachers, nor inclined mine eare to them that instructed me?*

THe complaint of the whoremonger is heere specified, wherein he bewaileth the hainousnes of his sinne, and the grieuousnes of the punishment; yet it is not the wise mans intent to giue vnto whoremongers any promise, or note of true repentance, by these sayings: for hee declareth what miserie should bring them vnto it, and extort it from them, and not what grace it should worke: for many are driuen to make this confession which neuer repent of their sinnes, nor come to saluation. The holy Ghost therefore bringeth their owne testimonie, witnessing how they are plagued, and not how they are conuerted: the sinne which he acknowledgeth is not the direct act of adulterie, or fornication, but that which went before, and made a way for the same, which was contempt of *instruction*, and reproofe; which he aggrauateth by the manner, that it was with hatred thereof, and the hatred from the root, euen from his heart, and therefore vehement and deadly: and the effect that followed vpon it, that he was disobedient vnto those which were set ouer him, and had authoritie to teach him. It is as if he should haue said: How long haue I hated instruction and correction? What a beast was I, and voide of common sense so to detest that information and discipline, which would haue done me so much good, and reiected all that wholesome aduice and counsell, which they that were wise, and knew what was best for me, which were also my friends, and shewed their faithfulnes, did minister vnto me?

Verse 14. *I am almost in all euill, in the midst of the congregation and assemblie.*

THe punishment which hee bewaileth is aggrieued partly by the quantitie and measure of it, partly by the qualitie and

and manner of it. For the former, it is of large extent, and very generall; he ſaith that he is *almoſt in all euill*, there is ſcarce any miſerie which he is free from; hee is couered with ſhame, hee is pinched with want, hee is tormented with paine, hee is plagued in his name, in his goods, in his body, in his ſoule, in himſelfe, and thoſe that belong vnto him: for the latter, it is conſpicuous, and notorious: he ſaith, that he is in this caſe *in the midſt of the congregation and aſſemblie*, either for that his facts, and misbehauiour are cenſured by the Magiſtrate to his often rebuke, and infamie in the publike aſſembly; or becauſe his plagues were vniuerſally knowne to the multitude, and all men vnderſtood what filthineſſe he had committed, and what calamities he now ſuſtained. By the ſame argument, and after the ſame manner *Iob* deſcribeth the miſerable condition of the wicked, *they are deſtroyed*, and as it were ground to peeces *in the gate*.

Verſe 15. *Drinke waters out of their owne ciſterne, and running waters out of thine owne well.*

THe ſcope of theſe words, and others following, is to perſwade men to a contrary courſe, namely, to a chaſt, cleane, and honeſt conuerſation, alluring them thereunto by a promiſe of an happie ſtate and condition, contrary to that of the whoremaſter, for hee oppoſeth Gods bleſſing and plentie to that bitter cup of curſe and penurie, which thoſe wretched ſinners were driuen to acknowledge that they had drunk of ſo deeply: wherein thou muſt note alſo that honour, and bodily welfare, and comfort of heart, being oppoſite to the diſgrace, diſeaſes, and vexation of minde, are to bee vnderſtood as well as maintenance for the eſtate, though that onely, and none of them be expreſſed. *Drinke waters out of thine owne ciſternes.* In the land of Iſrael, and the countries bordring vpon it, wels, and ciſternes of water were very precious, and eſteemed for poſſeſſions of great worth, as appeareth by the eſtimation *Abraham* and *Iſaack* had them in: and ſo much may be collected from the ſpeech of the woman of Samaria to Chriſt, *Art*

Ioh.4.12. *thou greater then our father Iacob that gaue vs this well, and dranke thereof himselfe, and his children, and his cattell?* For water was the ordinary and common drinke (though they had also wine) and sweeter and better then ours is: so then this being a principall commoditie is put here for all others. And whereas he doth say, *drinke*, it is a precept, and an incouragement mixed together: as if he should haue said, Keep thy selfe honest, and beware of that beastly woman, that so thou maist retaine thine owne possessions, and enioy the comfortable vse and benefit of them.

Verse 16. *Let thy fountaines be dispersed abroad, and riuers of waters in the streetes.*

17. *Let them be onely thine, and not a strangers with thee.*

18. *Let thy fountaine be blessed, &c.*

LEt *thy fountaine*, &c. Looke so to thine owne estate as that thou maist be able to communicate to others, and bee not niggardly, but liberall to distribute to those which be in wāt: *and the riuers of thy waters in the streetes*, viz. Let those good things wherewith the Lord hath endowed thee, be made profitable for the comfort of many, and euen for the publike benefit of the place where thou dwellest. So that where the sinfull adulterer had not enough left to maintaine himselfe, a good man that in conscience, and feare of God flieth from that sinne, shall haue wherewith hee shall bee able to relieue many others. *Let them be thine owne.* He meaneth not but that others should haue the vse of them, as need requireth, according to the former verse, but that they should be rightly possessed, and not riotously spent. *And not the strangers with thee*, viz. Bring not to passe by thy follie and disorder, thou shouldest bestow them vpon thy lust, and make vile companions either owners of all, or to share equally with thee, and to haue as much to doe with them as thy selfe.

Let thy fountaine be blessed. Bee vertuous in keeping thy *vessel in holines and honor*, auoiding the lust of concupiscence: be mercifull in ministring to them that be in necessitie: and

be

bee prouident not to ſpend thy goods vpon vnworthy perſons, and thy *fountaine*, thy ſtate and poſſeſſions ſhall be bleſſed, God by his prouidence, and goodneſſe ſhall proſper them.

And reioyce with the wife of thy youth. Hitherto hee hath prohibited adultery, and giuen men warning to beware of it: and now hee preſcribeth a remedie, which whoſoeuer ſhall vſe, ſhall vndoubtedly be deliuered from the perill of it: and that is, the loue and kinde vſage of our owne yoke-fellow: which loue is here intimated by the effect of it; *reioyce, viz.* with the wife of thy youth, take pleaſure and delight in her; liue cheereſully with her whom the Lord hath firſt matched with thee, as moſt naturally louing, and to bee beloued. And ſo ought men alſo to deale with their ſecond wiues, and ſuch as are matrones, and ancient. *Bathſhebah* deſerued to bee as much beloued of *Dauid*, as *Michol*, and no doubt ſhee was a great ioy and comfort to him.

Verſe 19. *Let her be as the louing Hinde, and pleaſant Roe: let her breaſts ſatisfie thee at all times: and erre thou in her loue continually.*

AND this is illuſtrated by two compariſons, one of the *Hart*, and the other of the Roe-bucke; both which doe exceedingly loue, and in their loue follow after their mates, the Hinde, and the Roe. *Let her breaſts ſatisfie thee at all times.* The meanes to nourish and preſerue this loue is, to continue a conſtant liking of, and contentment with her perſon, that as it was pleaſing to thee when thou diddeſt firſt ſet thine heart vpon her, and make choice of her; ſo no infirmities ſhould cauſe thy mind to be alienated away from her, and dote vpon others. *Let her breaſts, &c.* her preſence, and perſonage, and the vſe of her body *ſatisfie thee*, as well delight thine eyes, and otherwiſe ſuffice, as the milke of the mothers breaſts doth content the appetite of the infant. *At all times*, not onely in the flower of youth, and freſhneſſe of beautie, but afterwards when faireneſſe and naturall beautie ſhall bee de-

cayed,

cayed, euen during the whole ſeaſon you ſhall liue together. *And erre thou in her loue*, ſpare not to bee inamored with her, and rather haue too high an opinion of her, then too meane: thinke her for thee, and in thine eye the beautifull of all others: walke with her, talke with her; be moſt kinde and louing vnto her, and let her bee moſt acceptable and pleaſing vnto thee.

Verſ. 20. *For why wilt thou my ſon, be raviſht with a ſtrange woman, or imbrace the boſome of a ſtranger?*

THere followeth the concluſion of this whole matter vpon the premiſes inferred:

wherein
1. Hee ſheweth that there remaineth no cauſe at all why a man ſhould giue himſelfe to whoredome, and deale perfidiouſly with his wife. verſe 20.
2. He ſheweth the dangerous eſtate of them that breake wedlocke to commit whoredome. verſ. 21. 22. 23.

The former he propoundeth by way of queſtion, demanding *why*, as if he hauing gathered his arguments together, he ſhould haue thus ſaid: Wherefore my ſonne, ſeeing whoredome hath ſo many and ſo great diſcommodities and diſcomforts following on the one ſide, and a good wife brings ſo many, and ſo great comforts on the other; what cauſe or reaſon is there, why leauing or forſaking thy wife, thou ſhouldeſt giue thy ſelfe vnto an harlot, and commit wickedneſſe with her? (for vnder honeſt words of imbracing *her boſome*, he vnderſtands the filthy act of adultery: foraſmuch as he that is ſo impudent and audatious to doe the one, will not be aſhamed, or afraid to practiſe the other.) If there were no comfort to be found in the company of a lawfull wife, yet the diſcommodities that follow vpon a whore ſhould diſſwade thee from her. If there were no miſchiefe from a whore, yet the ſolace which a lawfull yoke-fellow will yeeld, would make thee preferre her before the harlot.

Verſe 21.

Verſ. 21. *For the waies of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondreth all his goings.*

THe latter part of this concluſion touching the dangerous eſtate of adulterers, hee declareth by generall reaſons, which are common to other ſinnes with this. The firſt is from the cleere ſight of Gods eyes, which is ſuch, as all the waies of all men are ſeene of them, and ſo cleerely, diſtinctly, and perticularly, as if they lay, or were purpoſely ſet one by one ouer against his eyes, ſo that he need not to turne backe, or ſo much as to turne aſide to looke vpon them. This argument is encreaſed by his curious noting and obſeruing all our pathes, which is enlightened by a metaphor of *weighing them*, as the Gold-ſmith doth his gold and ſiluer in a paire of ballances.

Verſ. 22. *His owne iniquitie ſhall take the wicked himſelfe; and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſinnes.*

Verſ. 23. *He ſhall die without inſtruction, and for that in the greatneſſe of his follie he goeth aſtray.*

THe ſecond argument whereby this danger is manifeſted, is taken from the effect of wicked mens ſinne, and by way of gradation, *His owne wickedneſſe* (ſaith he) *ſhall take the wicked himſelfe*, howſoeuer for a time the adulterer, or any other vngodly man may goe abroad freely, and bee out of all trouble, yet at the laſt his ſin, and Gods iudgement for them, like a Sergeant, or Conſtable, or other officer ſhall apprehend him: for his conſcience ſhall checke him, and ſummon him before the tribunall ſeate of God, beſides the externall curſes and plagues that ſhall ſeaze vpon him, *and hee ſhall bee held with the cords of his ſinne*, his guiltineſſe and puniſhments, the terrours of his hart with plagues and miſeries ſhall, as Iaylors, binde him with ſuch bonds or irons, as it were, as that he ſhall not be able with wit, or wealth, or all the meanes hee can vſe to free himſelfe, and eſcape from Gods vengeance. At the laſt,

death

death and destruction, as the Lords executioners shall take away his life from him, and torment him with the damned for euer. Now all this shall befall him *for want of instruction*, because he refused to be instructed, *and goeth astray in his great follie*, turneth out of the good way of holinesse and righteousnesse, and wandreth in his carnall reason, and fleshly lusts, and according to the peruersenes of his obstinate and wilfull hart, which of all follies and madnesse is the greatest, grossest, and most palpable: no child is so fillie, no idiote is so simple, no franticke person is so deuoide of vnderstanding, no beast is so brutish, as hee that will reiect Gods wise counsell to satisfie himselfe in his sinfull desires.

CHAPTER. VI.

Vers.1. *My sonne, if thou bee surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken hands with a stranger,*

Vers.2. *Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.*

THe instructions contained in this chapter are of two sorts. Some are caueats to beware of vices: some precepts to imbrace the doctrine and rules of wisedome, which direct to the exercise of vertue, in the 20.21.22. verses. Three kinds of vices are forbidden: one which carrieth a shew of duty, and amongst vnwise men is very plausible, and that is rash suretiship, in the fiue first verses: the next is a neglect of duty, and standeth in omission of that which ought to bee performed, and that is slothfulnesse, in the six next: the third is that which is contrary to dutie, and is the practise of that which is sinfull and euill, and this hee distributeth into many perticulars, whereof diuers he taxeth together, and more briefly condemneth, in the 16.17.18. and 19. verses: and one hee pursueth more largely with a set discourse and prosecution, and that is

is the ſinne of whoredome in the twelue laſt verſes.

Of this raſh ſuretiſhip, he { 1. Deſcribeth the perill. verſ. 1.2. 2. Preſcribeth the remedies for it. verſ. 3.4.5.

To ſhew the danger, he thus ſpeaketh in effect: My ſonne, if it ſo fall out with thee, (as ſomtimes it doth with vnaduiſed men) that thou become a pledge or ſurety for thy neighbour; or haſt giuen thy hand, bill, or bond for a ſtranger, to whom thou doeſt owe no ſuch ſpeciall duty, do not eſteeme it a light matter; but know that thou art intangled in a ſnare, like to a bird in a net, or a Deere in a toyle; and that which is an heauie caſe, *thou art inſnared with the words of thy mouth.* For a man hauing giuen his word to another, and ſo he for whom he vndertakes make default of performance, and himſelfe not well able to diſcharge it, is become a ſeruant, or captiue (ſo farre as the ſumme extendeth) to him to whom hee hath giuen his word, or bond, hee is fallen into the creditors hand, who may take the forfeiture, and ſo ouerthrow his ſtate and familie, or he may arreſt him, and keepe him in priſon, or chaſe from place to place, that he ſhall be able neither to manage his calling, or with comfort, ſafety, and liberty to enioy the ſociety of his neighbours.

Verſ. 3. *Doe this now my ſonne, and deliuer thy ſelfe, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend, goe humble thy ſelfe, and ſolicite thy friend.*

Verſ. 4. *Giue not ſleepe to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eye lids.*

Verſ. 5. *Deliuer thy ſelfe, as the Roe from the hand* of the hunter, *and a bird from the hand of the fowler.*

THe remedie to bee vſed in ſuch a diſtreſſed eſtate is heere propoſed, which conſiſteth in ſubmiſſiue humiliation, and importunate ſupplication. He perſwadeth a man ouertaken this way, and in hazard to be ouerthrowne, to hearken to his counſell, ſaying, *Doe this now my ſon, deliuer thy ſelfe, for*

as

as much as thou art come into thy neighbors hand, leſt the ſnare intrap thee, or be hurtfull to thee or thine, in as much as thou art fallen into the power of the creditor, doe thine endeauour to be deliuered out of it, vſe all good meanes for thine indemnitie, in moſt humble manner, & be importunate, and almoſt impudent in preſſing thy friends or neighbours: as the creditor, that he would deale fauourablie in the time, or in the ſum, or in other caſes, as there is occaſion: the debtor for whom thou art bound, that hee would finde meanes by himſelfe, or his friends to make payment; and friends that they may helpe thee with counſell, or their fauour, or their purſe, if need require, and they be able. Now if any thinke this a baſe thing to humble himſelfe, it may bee to his equals, yea peraduenture to his inferiours, *Salomon* telleth him that hee muſt conſider that hee is now fallen into his *hands*, and thereby is become captiue, and as it were a ſeruant; and therfore as the caſe now ſtands muſt make no difficulty to ſeeke, and ſue, and to pray, and entreate, as an humble ſuppliant.

Verſ. 4. In this he requireth celerity, and preſent proceeding: delaies are dangerous, and therefore in ſuch a buſineſſe by all poſſible meanes to be auoided; wherefore, ſaith hee, *Giue no ſleepe to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eye lids*, goe in hand with it this preſent day, and deferre it not ſo long as the next morrow, before thou goeſt to bed, or takeſt any reſt, with all ſpeed and diligence ſeeke thy ſecurity, and obtaine thy freedome.

Verſ. 5. Finally, as he admoniſheth that this be done ſpeedily, and without delay, ſo doth he aduiſe to doe it carefully, and without remiſneſſe, and that by the example of brutiſh creatures. As therefore the Doe, and other beaſts, labour by all meanes to eſcape the purſuit which is made after them; or as the foules ſtriue to get out of the net wherein they are intangled; ſo (ſaith he) endeauour thou with might and maine, to come out of theſe cumberſome bonds of ſuretiſhip.

Verſ. 6.

Verſ. 6. *Goe to the Ant, O ſluggard, conſider her waies, and be wiſe.*

BEcauſe vnaduiſed ſuretiſhip is more eaſily ſeene, and confeſſed to be the cauſe of diuers mens calamities, thē idleneſſe is, and men bee more ready to hearken to admonition, and to be warned of it; hee therefore dealt mildlier in the reproofe of that ſinne, then of this ſlothfulneſſe: for hee ſetteth roughly vpon the ſluggard, hee doth not *ſonne* him, or *child* him at all, but rather checketh and chideth him, and that in ſharpe manner. This vice he diſgraceth, and condemneth by three arguments: firſt, by the abſurditie of it, and of their behauiour which giue themſelues vnto it, in the 6. and 7. verſes: ſecondly, by the duration, and continuance of it, for that it holdeth them in bondage which once fall into, in the 9. and 10. verſes: thirdly, by the euill euent that will follow vpon it; namely, penurie and want, in the eleuenth verſe. To ſhew the abſurdity of it he bringeth the example of a brutiſh creature, of a weake, ſmall, and contemned creature, to condemne their wretchleſneſſe which giue ouer themſelues to litherneſſe; for it is a ſhame for men endued with reaſon, not to prouide ſo well for themſelues as the ſillie creatures which are voide of reaſon; but he doth not only ſend the ſluggard to marke their examples, but puts him to ſchoole to them, and makes them his maſter, that they ſhould teach him, and hee ſhould learne more wiſedome and vnderſtanding. *Goe to the Ant*, ſaith hee, as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, There are many things that might perſwade thee to labour, as Gods commandement, and ordinance; his promiſe to them that obey it; his puniſhments on them that are diſobedient; their owne neceſſity for the ſupport of their eſtate; the example of painefull and induſtrious men: but I will vrge none of theſe, but that which may make thee aſhamed, ỹ example of the feeble Ant; *conſider her waies*, obſerue her induſtrie and diligence; *and be wiſe*, let her ſedulity prouoke thee, ſhake off thy ſluggiſhneſſe, and henceforth be painfull and prouident: for what greater point of wiſdome

is there, then by obeying Gods precepts both to prouide for our ſelues, and be partakers of his gracious promiſe: or what greater folly, then to denie to God our owne endeuour for our owne good?

Verſe 7.8. *Which hauing no guide, ouerſeer, or ruler, prouideth her meate in the ſummer, and gathereth her foode in harueſt.*

TWo things hee commendeth in the ant, or emmet: the one, her readineſſe, that ſhe worketh voluntarily without compulſion: the other, her prouidence (if wee may ſo call it) that ſhe trauelleth ſeaſonably, and whilſt time ſerueth. It is ſaid that ſhe hath neither *guide, ouerſeer, or ruler*, ſhe hath neither captaine, or leader to ſhew her the way; nor taskemaſter, or other like officer to appoint to her her taske, and call vpon her for the doing of it: nor king, or ruler to puniſh her negligence, or want of forecaſt, nor to reward her for her diligence. And in this reſpect, another kinde of creature is praiſed in the
Prou.30.27. 30. chapter. *The locuſts haue no king, yet goe they foorth all of them by bands*, ſhewing their prudence: he ſaith, ſhe laboureth, bearing, and drawing foode, and matter for her lodging with ſuch trauell and paine, as is almoſt incredible: that which one cannot doe alone, two or more combining themſelues together will effect: *in ſummer*, viz. when the ayre is warme, and the way drie & ſmooth, *and in the harueſt*, when graines of corne lie here, and there, ſcattered abroad, which in winter are not to be had, and this to the end ſhe may prouide, and lay vp againſt the time of neede. The application hereof is concealed by *Salomon*, but to bee ſearched out by the reader, and declared by the interpreter; and it conſiſteth partly of a reprehenſion, and partly of an inſtruction. In the reprehenſion the ſluggard is taxed, and obbraided, both with regardleſnes of his owne good, and the contempt of the preſidents of diligence, which are propoſed vnto him, and thoſe gouernours which are ſet ouer him: as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, Of how much blame art thou worthie which haſt ſo many leaders to

conduct

conduct thee in the way: ſo many to call vpon thee, and vrge thee to thy dutie: ſo many commanders, and rulers in the familie, in the Church, and in the Common-wealth, both to incourage thee in thy diligence, and to cenſure, and puniſh the contrarie, and yet notwithſtanding thou paſſe thy time in ſloth, and neglect the opportunitie, and lay vp nothing for the time of neede? In the inſtruction euery man is taught to vſe the benefit of the *ſummer*, and *harueſt* of youth, and health, and opportunitie to lay vp, and prouide againſt the time of age, ſicknes, and other impediments, or neceſſities.

Verſe 9.10. *How long wilt thou ſleepe, O ſluggard? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleepe? yet a little ſleepe, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleepe.*

THe continuance of his ſlothfulnes, or ſleepines (for all is one, or at leaſt they are indiuiduall companions, the one begetting the other: for idleneſſe filleth the body full of humours, and abundance of humours cauſeth much ſleepe) hee obiecteth by way of expoſtulation: *How long wilt thou ſleepe?* Conſider how much time thou haſt loſt; for hee that ſleepeth moderatly, yet commonly ſpendeth the third part of his life therein: whereunto if thou adde all the reſt of thy time that thou haſt idlely, and vnprofitably ſpent, thou ſhalt eaſily ſee what little cauſe thou haſt to beſtow any more in that ſluggiſh manner; and therefore why wilt thou not breake off and make an end? This rebuke is very emphaticall, as if the Lord himſelfe were by a mans bed ſide to call him to reckoning for the loſſe of his time, and to rowſe him out of his drowſie ſleepe.

Verſe 10. *A little ſleepe, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleepe.*

HEre hee painteth out the ſluggard in liuely colours, and to expoſe him to ſcorne, bringeth him expreſſing his owne ſloth in his owne words, Let me haue (ſaith he) a little

ſleepe, a little ſlumber; let me yet a little fold my hands and armes together, as they are wont to doe that purpoſely ſet themſelues to ſleepe.

Verſ.11. *So ſhall thy powertie come as on one that trauelleth, and thy neceſſitie as an armed man.*

LAſtly, he declareth the effect and iſſue of this, and that is pouertie; which is allegorically threatned to come with ſpeede and violence, the ſluggard reſembled vnto a ſlothfull wayfairing man, that maketh no ſpeede to goe with company, or to trauell at due houres, and pouertie to the theeſe that commeth vpon him to take his purſe: neceſſitie ſhall therefore ouertake him ſuddenly, as a ſwift traueller doth him that walketh ſlowly, dreaming therefore that hee hath wealth, and goods for many yeeres, hee is fallen into debt, and growne to be a begger euen before he thought his eſtate had been declining; and as neceſſitie makes haſte, and is felt before it is foreſeene, ſo it maketh as ſtrange an aſſault, it is better weaponed then the ſluggard, and ſo too hard for him, it will perforce haue that which it commeth for, and bereaue him of his ſubſtance, and cannot bee reſiſted. Wee ſee this verified in many, whom neither great patrimonie left vnto them, nor wit, nor ſtrength, nor ſtiends, nor entailes, nor any other meanes could preſerue from ruine, and vtter vndoing; idlenes made them vnthriftie, and riotous, and vnthriftineſſe and riot conſumed all their ample poſſeſſions.

Verſe 12. *A naughtie perſon, a wicked man walketh with a froward mouth.*

13. *He winketh with his eyes, hee ſpeaketh with his feete, hee teacheth with his fingers.*

14. *Frowardnes is in his heart, he deuiſeth miſchiefe continually, he ſoweth diſcord.*

HAuing reproued the vice that ſeemeth a vertue, and that neglect of dutie which of many is ſcarce acknowledged

to

to be a vice, hee commeth to the third sort, those misdemeanours which are notoriously knowne, and cannot be denied to be grieuous offences: and first he describeth the lewdnes of the person: and secondly, proueth the pernitiousnes of the vices: and thirdly, threatneth a plague and iudgement to be executed on him at length for both. The person is notified both by his properties, and by his effects: by his properties, that he is naught, vngratious, and dissolute, *a man of Belial* [a], that will beare no yoke of gouernment, either of God, or man: one that liues as though there were no law, of no worth, [b] that profiteth nothing, or [c] shall rise to nothing, and is good for nothing, or a man of iniquitie. Thus is hee stiled and intituled: for the Hebrew composition will beare any of these significations, or all of them.

[a] *Beli gnol.*
[b] *beli iagnal.*
[c] *beli iagnathing.*
leh.

Then follow the effects, that he is very infectious, and apt to corrupt others: as first, by his words, he walketh with a froward mouth, it is his guise and custome to speake prophanely, irreuerently of God and his ordinances: or that vseth to lie, to sweare, and forsweare, to flatter, to slaunder, to backbite, or to carrie tales; the which abuse of his speech hee setteth foorth by comparing them to a mouth peruerted, or drawne aside.

Then secondly by his deedes, that hee doth notably abuse the seuerall parts and members of his body to doe mischiefe, by seuerall gestures, and perticular actions: so that which he cannot, or dareth not perswade by words, that he doth by his eyes, feete, and fingers. 13

And hereof he assigneth the cause to be the wickednesse of his heart, which he calleth *frowardnesse*; which hee doth aggrauate by vttering the same in the plurall number: for hee saith not, *frowardnesse*, but *frowardnesses*; noting thereby that his heart is filled and stuffed with such matter, from whence it is that it runneth ouer with such words, gestures, and actions, as are before spoken of. And further to decipher him in his damnable behauiour, he discouereth the manner of his practises, *he imagineth mischiefe*: signifying that the naturall corruption which is in him, being common to all men, increa- 14

ſeth, and confirmeth *by deuiſing*, and in his minde, & thoughts, as it were, forging miſchiefe, no otherwiſe then a Smith, Potter, or other Artificer doth his workes. Whereunto yet another circumſtance is added to make his ſinne out of meaſure ſinfull, that he is vnceſſant in his diuelliſh attempts. Whereas the Smith, and other workmen, worketh, forgeth, and frameth ſometimes, and ſometimes reſteth, this man is forging, and framing villanie perpetually, and that to the hurt of many others: for his whiſpering, flattering, lying, ſtorming, backbiting, &c. cauſeth contention, and raiſeth vp ſtrife, euen among friends.

Verſe 15. *Therefore ſhall his calamitie come ſuddenly. ſuddenly ſhall he be broken without remedie.*

HEre followeth the threatning of the plague and calamitie to ſuch a man, which is no leſſe then deſtruction it ſelfe: which is amplified by the manner of it: firſt, *He ſhall be broken in peeces:* he ſhall not haue a ſmall wound, but a deadly wound, and vtter vndoing in his eſtate, name, body, and ſoule: ſecondly, it ſhall be *ſuddenly*, vnexpected, not feared, before euer he thought of it, which cauſeth it to bee the more horrible and hideous: and thirdly, it ſhall be *without remedie*, which no policie, nor power, no wealth, nor friend, nor other meanes whatſoeuer, ſhall be able to preuent, or remedie. The Prophet *Iſaiah* doth in an elegant manner denounce the ſame, ſaying: *This iniquitie ſhall be vnto you as a breach ready to fall, ſwelling out in an high wall, whoſe breach commeth ſuddenly, at an inſtant: and he breake it, as the breaking of a potters veſſell, that is broken in peeces, he ſhall not ſpare.*

Iſai.30.13.14.

Verſe 16. *Theſe ſixe things doth the Lord hate, yea ſeuen are an abomination to his ſoule.*

IN the premiſes we haue ſeene the wicked perſon by ſundrie arguments deſcribed, and here we ſhall finde the pernitiouſnes of diuers vices euicted, and in the firſt place in a more generall

nerall ſort, he reciteth the manner of them, *ſixe*, yea *ſeuen*, theſe certaine number for vncertaine: for the Lord deteſteth many more then theſe, and as much alſo is offended with them, but a few are put for all: and it ſeemeth that theſe are heere mentioned as companions of ſlothfulnes, and therefore are cenſured next after it, as being commonly attendant vpon it; and theſe he proueth to be odious, and men ought to loath them, and likewiſe very dangerous, and men ought to feare them, becauſe God hateth them: which he firſt expreſſeth in plaine words, and afterwards amplifieth by a correction, ſaying, they are *an abomination to his ſoule*, ſpeaking of God, as of a man for our capacitie, and the more effectuall affecting of vs. God abhorreth nothing but that which is euill, and loathſome, and nothing is better which he abhorreth, neither can there be any ſafetie in doing that which is ſo offenſiue to him: being diſgraced therefore by that one argument, they are manifeſted to be vgleſome, and hideous; and as noyſome, and perilous, as if the vilenes thereof had been painted out by many others.

Verſe 17. *A proud looke, a lying tongue, and hands that ſhed innocent blood:*

18 *An heart that deuiſeth wicked imaginations: feete that be ſwift in running to miſchiefe:*

19 *A falſe witneſſe that ſpeaketh lyes, and him that ſoweth diſcord among brethren.*

THeſe verſes containe a perticular enumeration of thoſe ſixe things, and that ſeuenth which the Lord hateth in ſuch deteſtation. The firſt is pride, which is ſet foorth by the ſigne thereof, *a hautie eye*, for that chiefly ſheweth it ſelfe in the *eyes*. The ſecond is lying, and vntruth, which is declared by the inſtrument wherewith it is vttered, the *tongue*, which alſo therefore is made hatefull to God. The third is violence and crueltie, howſoeuer practiſed; but becauſe the hand commonly is the agent of it, and is ſtained therewith, it is ſpecified. The fourth is the plotting, and deuiſing of miſchiefe:

whereof becauſe the heart is the chiefe worker, and the ſpring alſo from whence it followeth, it is ſubiect to Gods diſpleaſure, and deteſtable in his ſight. The fifth is the delight in ill doing, and the committing of it with greedineſſe, when men are preſſed and readie to any ſinfull actions; which is argued by the ſignes and effects, that the *feet are ſwift*, doe make haſt and runne thereunto. The ſixth is ſlandering, or giuing wrong information againſt any man by accuſation, or witneſſe-bearing, or any manner of reporting. This maketh the efficient, the partie guilty of it obnoxious to Gods diſpleaſure. The laſt is to be a make-bate to raiſe diſcord amongſt louing friends, and to ſet them at variance, which before were at peace, and liued in concord. Hee therefore which doth ſo, prouoketh the Lord, and maketh a greater diſcord betweene God and himſelfe, then poſſibly can be between neighbour and neighbour.

Verſ. 20. *My ſonne, keepe thy fathers commandement, and forſake not the law of thy mother.*

SO many vices hauing been reproued, hee now inserteth a precept to furniſh the minde with knowledge and wiſedome, for the preuention of thoſe crimes, if wee be yet cleere from them, or to be cured of them, if we be faulty in them, as alſo to bee well fenced againſt that which hee is yet further to exaggerate that lothſome and deteſtable ſinne of adulterie, which he hath ſo often inueighed againſt already:

where note { An exhortation. verſ. 20. 21.
And the reaſons of it. verſ. 22. 23. 24.

The exhortation is propounded in a { Proper ſpeech. ver. 20.
Metaphor. verſ. 21.

The former is, *keepe thy fathers inſtruction*: for which, ſee chap. 1. verſ. 8.

Verſ. 21.

Verſ. 21. *Binde them continually vpon thine heart, tye them about thy necke.*

THe ſecond is *binde them, &c.* For which ſee chap. 3. ver. 3. But heere is added *continually*, which was not in the former place; to teach, that the heart or minde of man ſhould be alwaies exerciſed in the doctrine of God, euen then when hee hath not opportunity to ſpeake of it.

Verſe 22. *When thou goeſt, it ſhall leade thee: when thou ſleepeſt, it ſhall keepe thee: when thou awakeſt, it ſhall talke with thee.*

THe reaſon followeth, and is taken from the ſweet and comfortable effects of Gods doctrine, deliuered, priuately or publikely, in all the actions and times of our life; which he diſtributeth into three ſorts, *walking, ſleeping, and awaking*: after ſleepe againe, *when we walke, viz.* when we are exerciſed in the waies and workes of our calling, *ſhe ſhall leade vs: viz.* ſhee ſhall guide and direct vs, that wee wander not into any euill way that may be diſpleaſing to God, hurtfull to our ſelues or others. See chap. 3. verſ. 23. and 14. verſ. 12. *When we ſhall lye downe to ſleepe, ſhe ſhall keepe vs*, and bee as it were a watch vnto vs, that we ſleepe ſecurely. See chap. 3. 24. *It ſhall talke with thee when thou awakeſt*, it will be as a familiar friend to vs, conferring with vs in the night, in the morning, in the day time, of Ieſus Chriſt, of the remiſſion of ſins, of the mercies of God, of the promiſes of the word, and of all heauenly and ſpirituall matters.

Verſ. 23. *For the commandement is a lampe, the law is light, and reproofes of inſtruction are the way of life.*

HE confirmeth this reaſon by an argument taken from the excellency and vertue of this doctrine, which is cleerely ſet downe by familiar compariſons. The firſt, of a

lampe,

lampe, whereof there is great vse in the night; the second of *light*, whereof there is singular vse in the day: the third, that it is a *beaten way*, whereof there is great vse for passengers, and trauellers, which he amplifieth by an argument from the lesse to the greater: if the corrections and rebukes of it are so, what are then the milde directions and promises? and from the end whither it leadeth; namely, to life, *viz.* eternall blessednesse. So that whereas we and our waies are nothing else but night and darkenesse, and know not which way to moue hand or foot, but to our destruction, the doctrine of God is for the night, *a candle*, and for the day, *the Sunne*, that wee may see, and iourney in the ready high way of saluation. The Psalmist hath the very like saying, acknowledging to God that his *word was a lampe to his feet, and a light to his pathes*.

Psal.119.105.

Vers. 24. *To keepe thee from the euill woman, from the flattery of a strange woman.*

FInally, he commendeth this doctrine of God, & these corrections of instruction, by the end & vse of them; namely, the preseruation & safe keeping of a man from the danger of infection by an harlot, wherby he meaneth also sin of any sort, though he purposely name this rather then any other; partly because it is often the fruit of idlenesse, which hee hath euen now impugned in this chapter, and partly because the young man, whom he professeth there to teach, is commonly much addicted thereunto. See chap. 2. vers. 16.

Vers. 25. *Lust not after her beauty in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eye lids.*

NOw hee commeth to the dehortation whereby hee dissuadeth from her:

which hee { 1. Proposeth, vers. 25. / 2. Enforceth with confirmations. vers. 26. to the end of the chapter.

Of the former there are two parts; first, an admonition, that hee

he doe not *in his heart* luſt after, or ſuffer his heart to bee enſnared by her beauty; and that for two reaſons, both becauſe euen that alone is a degree of adultery, as our Sauiour hath taught, as alſo for that if the heart (which commandeth all) be ouercome, it will neuer ceaſe to worke vpon all the parts of the body, the eyes, eares, tongue, &c. vntill the very act it ſelfe be accompliſhed. The ſecond is a caueat, that *ſhee take him not with her eye lids*: wherein he compareth the *eye lids*, and countenance of an harlot to a net, or ſnare, and the harlots heart, and her ſelfe to an hunter, or fowler, and the partie allured by her wanton lookes, to the bird, or beaſt caught in a net. Matth. 5. 28.

Verſ. 26. *For by meanes of a whoriſh woman*, a man is brought *to a morſell of bread, and the adultereſſe will hunt for pretious life.*

HEre hee backeth his admonition and caueat, with ſuch forcible conſiderations as might beſt worke vpon his reader, and make him to know how much it concerneth him to regard them; whereof two are here noted; the one, that this curſed ſinne draweth a man into pouerty, or beggery rather; the other, a ſhameſull death, or that which is in ſtead of that, and worſe then that, an euerlaſting death. Touching the former, he ſaith, *For an harlot*, or by meanes of an harlot, *a man is brought to a morſell of bread*, from plentie, to penurie; from variety of diſhes to one kinde, and that is dry bread; and from ſufficiencie and fulneſſe, to a ſhort pittance, euen one morſell, and many times this is to be asked at another mans doore, or at leaſt to be giuen as an almes from another mans hand. See for this, chap. 5. 10.

The latter is loſſe of life, which all the attempts of the adultereſſe (the married woman breaking the bands of wedlocke) doe tend vnto. *She hunteth for pretious life*, wherein he likeneth her to a cruell hunter, which purſueth an Hare, or other beaſt, not to catch onely, but to kill it: which though ſhe doe not directly intend and aime at, yet ſhe effecteth and bringeth to paſſe: for through her allurements, the perſon committing follie

follie with her is exposed to the rage of her husband, whose indignation is implacable, the sword of the Magistrate, proceeding seuerely against him, if not for the same crime, yet for some other thereby occasioned; and the wrath of God, who will either inflict a temporall punishment, to the vtter destruction of the body, or else powre downe intollerable plagues vpon the body and soule for euer. And this so prodigall expence of life is hereby the more condemnable, in that it is *pretious*, of such an excellent creation by Gods owne hand, or inspiration rather by his breath, and carrying such a stampe of his glorious image, and capable of such eternal blisse as Christ hath purchased with his owne blood, and euery one shall enioy, which through sinne doth not make forfeiture of it.

Vers. 27. *Can a man take fire in his bosome, and his clothes not be burnt?*

Vers. 28. *Can a man goe vpon hot coales, and his feet not be burnt?*

Vers. 29. *So is he that goeth in to his neighbours wife: whosoeuer toucheth her shall not be innocent.*

HAuing formerly laid downe his positions, he now handleth them more at large: and because of the securitie and presumption of men, flattering themselues, (that notwithstanding all this which is spoken, and other mens ill successe in the practise of this sinne, they shal escape wel enough, especially if they haue wit, or wealth, or others helpes whereby to shift for themselues, and auoide the penaltie) hee more at large confirmeth that hee said touching the grieuousnesse and certainty of this punishment, by two comparisons of the like or equall, and another of the lesse. The comparison of the like is as if hee should haue said; As it is impossible for a man to take coales of fire from the hearth, & put them into his bosome, betwixt his garments and body, and burne neither; or to tread on burning coales bare foot without scorching his feet: so it cannot be that a man should haue carnall company with another mans wife, without making himselfe guilty, and feeling

feeling the flame of Gods indignation, and incurring the iudgements formerly mentioned. *Iob* hath a ſaying not much vnlike to this, rendring a reaſon among others, why hee ſo heedfully ſhunned this miſchieuous ſinne of adultery: *It is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction, and would root out all mine encreaſe.* Iob 31.12.

Verſ. 30. *Doe not men deſpiſe a theefe if he ſteale to ſatisfie his ſoule, although he be hungry?*

Verſ. 31. *And if he be found, he ſhall reſtore ſeuen fold, hee ſhall giue all the ſubſtance of his houſe.*

THe ſecond kind of compariſon wherby the point in hand is cleered, is taken from a leſſer ſinne, namely, theft, being far inferiour to adultery, becauſe Gods law hath not ſo much condemned it, becauſe he hath appointed no ſuch ſeuere puniſhment for it: becauſe that the theefe taketh away more remote poſſeſſions, and ſuch as are of leſſe value and eſtimation: the whoremaſter the neereſt, the beſt, and that which is deareſt vnto him, the heart, the vſe of body, the fidelity of his wife: the theefe commonly bereaueth a man but of part of his goods; the whoremaſter attempts to defraud him and his of all, or of as much as he can, leauing a ſpurious and baſtardly ſeed in his houſe to vſurpe his inheritance, or other poſſeſſions after him. And yet the theefe eſcapeth not ſcotfree, notwithſtanding that need driueth him to ſteale. For firſt, hee draweth vpon himſelfe ſhame and reproch, and is made very contemptible thereby, as both this text affirmeth, and others teſtifie. *Iob* ſhewing the vile eſtate of certaine baſe companions, ſaith, *Men ſhouted after them, as at a theefe.* See alſo *Ieremiah* 48.27. And then hee hazardeth his eſtate thereby, either to ouerthrow it, or much impaire it: for looke how often he is apprehended and taken, ſo oft he ſhall be driuen to make reſtitution according to the law, though it bee againe and againe, yea euen ſeuen times and more, a certaine number of times for an vncertaine: which is to be payed, though it coſt him any thing, yea all that he hath, yea though his liberty goe alſo for it. Iob 30.5.

Verſ. 32.

Verſ. 32. *Who ſo committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh vnderſtanding: he that doth it deſtroyeth his owne ſoule.*

NOw let vs ſee the inference: if there bee ſo much perill and hurt in a ſmaller crime, what ſafety can there be looked for in this hainous offence? If the needie theefe ſmart ſo for that fault, how ſharpely and extremely ſhall the adulterous malefactor be puniſhed for his egregious and enormous wickedneſſe? He debaſeth him beneath the theefe; firſt, in the follie of his minde, as the cauſe of this his vicious behauiour, he is more abſurd and brutiſh then he, and hath leſſe wiſdome and vnderſtanding. Secondly, in the conſequence of his wretched life, and vncleane conuerſation, *hee deſtroyeth his ſoule*, hee doth offer violence vnto his life, and after a ſort becommeth a murtherer of himſelfe, by prouoking God ſpeedily to ſlay him, and eternally to damne him, beſides other plagues following, whereunto he makes himſelfe lyable.

Verſ. 33. *A wound, and diſhonour ſhall hee get, and his reproch ſhall not be done away.*

HE dwelleth vpon this matter of the adulterers puniſhment, that hee ſhall finde there ſhall meete with him, or fall vpon him *a wound*, or ſtroke, euen a deadly ſtroke vpon his body and minde, inflicted either by the Magiſtrate, the adultereſſes husband, or God himſelfe. *And ignominie* vpon his name, euen ſuch reproch as ſhal ſticke to him, liuing and dead, *and ſhall neuer be done away*; ſo that beſides the perill of this life into which the adulterer doth throw himſelfe, hee doth expoſe himſelfe to perpetuall reproch.

Verſ. 34. *For ielouſie is the rage of a man: therefore he will not ſpare in the day of vengeance.*

Verſ. 35. *He will not regard any ranſome; neither will hee reſt content, though thou gineſt many gifts.*

HE declareth the efficient of the threatned puniſhment to bee inflicted vpon the adulterer, namely, the wronged husband

husband of the harlot, to whom God will diſcouer his villanie wrought againſt him, and whom hee will raiſe vp, as his inſtrument to purſue that wicked caitiſe, proſecuting and following the matter againſt him with all ſeuerity. And in theſe words he meeteth with, and refelleth the vaine illuſion of the filthie perſon, who truſts either not to bee detected, or not much to be moleſted, hoping that he ſhall find his paramours husband very milde and fauorable. Nay, ſaith the Lord, Thou haſt giuen him iuſt cauſe of iealouſie, and therefore thou ſhalt finde him full of wrath and indignation; looke for no fauour at his hands, he neither will nor ſhall ſpare thee, if hee ſtrike thee not himſelfe, yet hee ſhall deliuer thee into the hand of the Magiſtrate to be puniſhed, he will not conceale thy leaudneſſe, but publiſh it to the world for thy ſhame and infamie: yet, ſaith he, I hope faire words may preuaile much, eſpecially gifts and rewards, I will hire him to be ſilent, and to put vp the iniurie offered; and if a ſmall ſumme will not ſuffice, I wil giue him a greater; if one gift will not preuaile, I will adde more vnto it, and beſtow many: hereunto the Lord replyeth that he ſhall bee made inexorable, that the ſight of a bribe, or any thing offered for the deflouring of his wife, ſhall the more imbitter him; and offer as many and as great as thou wilt, yet all ſhall doe thee no good, thou ſhalt for all this bee plagued and ſhamed.

Now we muſt not conclude hereupon that this ſentence at all times ſhall certainly be executed: for many husbands are not acquainted with the indignities of this kinde, which are offered vnto them; and many knowing of the diſhoneſty and faithleſneſſe of their wiues, are as bawdes vnto them, and acceſſarie to their naughtineſſe, ſuffering and allowing them to bee whoriſh and filthy: but euery adulterous whore-hunter may iuſtly expect this, when God ſetteth in with them, and takes the matter into his hand, they know not how ſoone their wickedneſſe may come to light, and how fierce and angry a man may bee made, whom they little ſuſpect to bee ſo implacable.

CHAPTER. VII.

Verſe 1. *My ſonne, keepe my words, and lay vp my commandements with thee.*

IN this chapter *Salomon* confirmeth from his owne experience, that which in the two former chapters, or elſewhere hee had teſtified, touching the fraudulent and pernitious practiſes of the harlot. The parts are three: the firſt is, an inſtigation to the ſtudious keeping of wiſedome and knowledge, in the fiue firſt verſes. The ſecond is, a narration of thoſe things which hee had ſeene and obſerued in her impudent behauiour, and anſwerable ſucceſſe, to the 24. verſe. The third is an application of the ſame vnto his readers, as an admonition and warning vnto them, in the foure laſt verſes.

In the firſt verſe, the Prophet returneth againe to his generall exhortation of receiuing, and keeping the doctrine, which he propoundeth, and is the ſame with the beginning of the ſecond chapter.

Verſe 2. *Keepe my commandements, and liue; and my law as the apple of thine eye.*

TO ſet an edge vpon his exhortation, that it might preuaile the better with vs, he addeth a promiſe of life, and that he doth after a moſt emphaticall manner, commanding vs to *liue*; thereby teaching, how preſent, and certaine the happines is that belongeth to the obedience of his precepts. After he expreſſeth the manner how he would haue vs to keepe his doctrine, by a ſimilitude, *viz.* as *the apple of the eye*, as that which is moſt precious vnto thee: for a man will ward, and keepe off violence from his head, before all other parts of his body,

body, and regardeth the face more then any other part of his head, and he reſpecteth the eye more then any other part of the face: for the eye is the light of the whole bodie, and therein the blacke, or *apple* of the *eye*, is moſt deare vnto him; which appeareth alſo by the other Scriptures: as Pſal.17.8. *Keepe me as the apple of thine eye.* And, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* Zach.2.8.

Verſe 3. *Binde them vpon thy fingers, write them vpon the table of thine heart.*

Verſe 4. *Say vnto Wiſedome, Thou* art *my ſiſter, and call Vnderſtanding thy kinſwoman.*

HE deliuereth the ſame precept in allegoricall ſpeeches: and firſt, he requireth to *binde them vpon our fingers*, that they may be as rings thereon, and for memorandums, as wee vſe to tye a thread or ſilke about our fingers, to put vs in mind of matters not to bee forgotten, and to write them *vpon the table of our heart*, viz. that they may be as a tablet hanging on our breaſt: as chap.3.3.

As if he could not ſatisfie himſelfe in this argument, he deliuereth the ſame thing in another ſimilitude, wherein hee attributeth a perſon to Wiſedome, and requireth that there bee ſuch inward friendſhip and familiaritie betwixt vs and her, as if ſhe were our ſiſter, and neereſt kinſwoman. It is a pleaſing thing to brothers and ſiſters, if they loue as they ought, to liue together in one houſe, as *Lazarus*, *Martha*, and *Mary*: Ioh.11. or if by occaſion of mariage they liue in diuers houſes, yet they delight one in another, and feaſt together, as did *obs* Iob 1. ſonnes and daughters. And thus conuerſant and familiar ought we to be with Wiſedome, and ſo much the rather becauſe we are ſtrangers in the world, and hated of the world, becauſe by this kindred and affinitie with Wiſedome, we become of kindred and alliance with our Sauiour Chriſt.

Verſe 5. *That they may keepe thee from the ſtrange woman, from the ſtranger* that *flattereth with her words.*

LAſtly, hee vrgeth this precept thus often and many waies deliuered, by an argument from the end and fruite, which is to keepe vs from this foule and grieuous ſinning againſt God, whereof he nameth one in ſtead of all, namely, adulterie, which he did before. Chap. 2.16. the 5.3. and 6.24.

Verſe 6. *For at the window of mine houſe, I looked through the caſement.*

Verſ. 7. *And behold among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths, a young man voide of vnderſtanding,*

Verſe 8. *Paſſing through the ſtreete neere her corner, and he went the way to her houſe.*

Verſe 9. *In the twilight in the euening, in the black and dark night.*

THere followeth now a liuely repreſentation of the former doctrine touching adulterie, vnder an example in fact; whereof the wiſe man himſelfe who relateth it, was an eye witnes. And firſt he ſheweth the occaſion, or opportunitie that was offered vnto the harlot, whereby ſhe had matter to worke vpon, in theſe two verſes. Secondly, the meanes which ſhe vſeth to effect her purpoſe, and draw an vnwarie perſon to this ſinne, vnto the 21. verſe. Laſtly, the euent and iſſue, in 21.22.23. verſes.

The occaſion and opportunitie was that ſhe eſpied a heedleſſe perſon within her danger, whom ſhe might ſeaze vpon as a fit pray for her. And he is deſcribed firſt, by his ignorance, and ſimplicitie, hee calleth him *a foole*, yea, which is more, *a man voide of heart*, viz. of vnderſtanding, iudgement, and wiſedome. Now he is ſo called, not that hee is a naturall, (for harloss are not wont to ſingle out them aboue other men) but becauſe he had not the feare of God, which is *the beginning of wiſedome,*

wiſedome, nor any good regard to keepe himſelfe from ſinne by auoiding the inducements to it.

Secondly, by his age, calling him a *young man*, youth, or ſtripling; thereby noting, that that age is the moſt ſlipperie time of our life, and moſt prone, as to many other ſinnes, ſo eſpecially to this.

Thirdly, the place is noted where he ſaw him, viz. *in the ſtreete, at the corner* that leades to the harlots *houſe*, like a fillie flye in the cobweb, where the ſpider had libertie to come vpon him at her pleaſure. Verſe 8.

Laſtly, by the time when hee wandred that way, that is, *in the twilight*, when it began to grow darke, at the cockſhote time, as it were, the ſeaſon that fitteth the whoremaſter, or harlot: according to the ſaying of *Iob*: *The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight*. Verſe 9. Iob 24.15.

Verſe 10. *And behold, there met him a woman, with the attire of an harlot, and ſubtill in heart.*

Verſe 11. *She is loud and ſtubborne, and her feete abide not in her houſe.*

Verſe 12. *Now ſhe is without, now in the ſtreetes, and ſhe lieth in waite at euery corner.*

THe former words declare how the ſimple young fellow caſt himſelfe into perils, by approching ſo neere to the harlots denne: in theſe, and others that follow, wee ſee her taking the aduantage by comming out vnto him, and artificially getting him into her pawes. And for this purpoſe the wiſe man noteth both what a one ſhe is, in the whole courſe of her behauiour, to the 13. verſe, and with what art and skill ſhe manageth this buſineſſe, in the others following. And one thing whereof hee taketh notice, and whereby hee deſcribeth her, is her apparell, wherein ſhe was tricked, and trimmed, vnbeſeeming the modeſtie of a ſober Matrone, or the honeſtie of a chaſt woman. The ſecond is, her inward deceit, and guilefulnes, in that ſhe was of *a ſubtill heart*. The third is, her vnwomanly diſpoſition, and properties: ſhe is a babler, and full of Verſ. 11.12.

tattle, she is *stubborne*, peruerse, and rebellious to God, and her husband, she is a gadder abroad, and euery where giuen to allure, and corrupt all those whom she can intice into her companie.

Vers. 13. *So she caught him, and kissed him: and with an impudent face said vnto him.*

NOw wee shall see how she plaieth her part in exercising her craft and cruelty, to worke the ruine of the warilesse foole, which is casting himselfe into her hands. And this she doth partly by vncomely actions: partly by countenance, shewing a brasen face, without feare, or shamefastnes: and partly by dissembling speeches, such as hereafter follow. Her vncomely actions here specified are three. The one is, that *she laid hold on him*: she should not haue indured him to *lay hold* on her; but for her to lay hold on him, was beyond all womanly modestie: the other, that she kissed him. A wife can scarce without bashfulnes *kisse her husband*, but is rather to expect it from him, then to preuent him in it; but for a woman to offer it to a stranger is a most shamefull part.

Verse 14. *I haue peace offerings with me: this day haue I paid my vowes.*

Verse 15. *Therefore came I out to meete thee, diligently to seeke thy face, and I haue found thee.*

FIrst, by her dissembling and inchanting speeches, as with a call, she allureth him into her house, offering him a baite which might perswade him vnto it, and couering the net or hooke that might terrifie him from it; the baite is, good cheare, a motiue that preuaileth much with young men, who commonly are much giuen vnto their appetite. The manner of the Israelites, and that according to the law of God, was, that in the Lords offerings, the fat and blood being offered, part of the flesh should goe to the Priests, and part to him that brought it: whereof they made a feast, (for it was somewhat

rare

rare to eate fleſh:) And (alluding to this) S. *Iames* ſaith, *Yee haue nouriſhed your ſelues as in the day* of ſlaughter. Now the better to couer her plot, and that hee ſhould not ſuſpect her treacherie, and miſchieuous purpoſe, ſhe pretendeth firſt, pietie and deuotion towards God, to whom ſhe had offered ſacrifice, which was an ordinary worke of religion, yea ſhe had made vowes, and performed them, which was extraordinary, and leſſe vſuall: ſecondly, great loue, and good affection towards him, whom ſhe much deſired to bee better acquainted with, and to make partaker of her beneficence and kindneſſe. *For this cauſe I am come foorth to meete thee:* as if ſhe ſhould haue ſaid, Becauſe I beare thee moſt entire good will, as ſoone as I ſaw thee, I longed for thy companie, and therfore I haue not ſent a meſſenger, which peraduenture would be more remiſſe, and ſlacke in intreating of thee, but am come my ſelfe to requeſt that I may bee beholden to thee to goe with me, and what good lucke is this that I meete ſo happily with thee?

Verſe 16. *I haue deckt my beds with couerings of tapeſtrie, with carued worke, linnen of Egypt.*

Verſe 17. *I haue perfumed my bed with mirrhe, aloes, and cynamom.*

HAuing preuailed to bring him to ſupper, ſhe now perſwades him to ſtay all night, and take a lodging with her, and (which ſhe would haue him vnderſtand) that ſhe needeth not to excuſe, as too homely, baſe, and courſe, but ſuch a one as will well ſerue a right good man, and to that end doth ſet it foorth by the ornaments, furniture, and ſweetes of it: as if ſhe ſhould ſay, Thou ſhalt haue a very commodious bed, and chamber, with curious curtaines, and couerings, with a carued bedſted, with fine ſheetes, with ſweete perfuming of all: I haue prouided to delight all, or moſt of thy ſenſes; as thy taſte hath alreadie been pleaſed with meates and drinkes, ſo ſhall thy ſight be with the ornaments of thy roome, and lodging, thy touch with the ſoftnes of thy lawnes, and thy ſmell with odoriferous perfumes: take a good offer therefore, and

refuſe it not, thou ſhalt perceiue thy welcome, and thy good entertainemen, thou ſhalt be lodged like a Prince.

Niruch. Verſ. 18. *Come, let vs take our fill of loue till the morning: let vs ſolace our ſelues with loues.*

NOw that the whore hath brought him to his chamber, or got him to bed, ſhee beginneth to diſcouer her purpoſe, and ſoliciteth him to the very act of adultery; and for the ſame alleageth ſuch reaſons as may perſwade him vnto it, and preuenteth ſuch doubts as may diſſwade him from it; *Come* (ſaith ſhee) *let vs take our fill*, and as it were make our ſelues drunke with loue; meaning thereby the ſatisfying of her filthy deſire and luſt all night long. Her reaſons are two, one from the cauſe, that it is an act of loue and good fellowſhip, that thereby they ſhall beſtow the time together like friends: the other is the effect, that it will bee ſweet, pleaſant, and delightſome to them both.

Ha aiſh. Verſ. 19. *For the husband is not at home, hee is gone a long iourney.*

Verſ. 20. *He hath taken a bag of money with him*; and *will come home at the day appointed.*

HEre the naughty-packe doth ſecure him of ſafety, that he needs not to caſt perils, nor dread any hurt that will come by it, for he might haue ſaid:

Obiect. What if thy husband come in the meane time, and take vs with the manner, we are both vndone.

Anſw. No feare of that, for hee is not at home; neither doth ſhee ſay, my husband is not at home, but the husband, ſpeaking contemptuouſly & diſdainefully of him, as if hee were a ſtranger to her.

Obiect. But what if he come home, though it be late, and finde mee in his bed, what ſhould become of me?

Anſw. That cannot be; for he is gone *a long iourney*, and hath taken a bag of money with him accordingly, he will come back by

by ſuch a time, and not afore: for the long abſence of her huſband is confirmed by two ſignes: the one, the great ſumme of money which hee tooke with him for his expences; and the other, the ſet day wherein he appointed to returne.

Verſ. 21. *With much faire ſpeech ſhee cauſed him to yeeld, Likchah. with the flattering of her lips ſhe forced him.*

HItherto of the inticement; heere followeth the lamentable and tragicall iſſue and effect thereof, which was, that he firſt did yeeld vnto the ſinne, and after did ſuſtaine the grieuous puniſhment thereof. The principall meanes whereby ſhe did perſwade him, was *her ſpeech*, which was both large and delightfull; for ſhe vſed many arguments: ſhee anſwered all obiections, her habite, her catching and kiſſing of him no doubt did worke vpon him, but the poyſon which did moſt intoxicate him was from her tongue. That which wee tranſlate *faire ſpeech*, is in the originall, doctrine, or diſcipline, and hee vſeth the ſame as comparing her vnto a ſchoole-miſtriſſe, but of impurity, and impiety, and her followers to ſchollers, or nouices learning of her: becauſe fooliſh men in their ſottiſhneſſe doe put themſelues to ſchoole to ſuch a teacher, rather then to lend their eare to the holy doctrine of the Lord. The holy Ghoſt alſo declareth the degrees of his falling, and as it were the ſteps of his deſcending. For firſt, ſhe bowed and enclined him; that is, ſhe moued his heart, and made it tractable to her perſwaſions; and after *drew*, or rather draue him violently to it with her words.

Verſ. 22. *He goeth after her ſtraight way, as an oxe goeth to the ſlaughter, as a foole to the correction of the ſtockes.*

Verſ 23. *Till a dart ſtrike through his liuer, as a bird haſteth to the ſnare, and knoweth that it is for life.*

BEfore it is ſaid ſhe moued him, yea ſhe inforced, and now ſhe hath ſped him: for ſhee hath made him to follow her into her houſe, vnto her table, into her chamber, into her bed,

and into her ſhamefull ſinne: thus we ſee the firſt effect of her practiſes, the corrupting of him with that abominable filthineſſe: the other, namely, the puniſhment and miſery is heere deſcribed by three compariſons of the like, *as an oxe to the ſlaughter*, hoping that he is going to his ſtall or paſture, when he is led to the ſlaughter-houſe, or ſhambles to be knockt on the head, or haue his throat cut. The ſecond is, *as a foole led to the ſtockes for correction*, as a malefactor carried to priſon, and kept in bonds, *vntill a dart ſtrike through his liuer*, vntill the day of execution, *when the dart*, or ſword, or other inſtrument wherewith offenders were wont to be put to death, did pierce his body, and take away his life. The third, *as a bird haſteth to the prey*, flying ſwift, and making ſpeed to the place, where ſhe looketh for food, and findeth a net, grinne, or lime-twigs, whereby ſhe is intangled, caught, and killed.

Verſ. 24. *Hearken now therefore, O children: attend to the words of my mouth.*

Verſ. 25. *Let not thine heart decline to her waies, goe not aſtray in her pathes.*

HE applieth here that which in the premiſes he had reported, exhorting his ſcholers to *hearken vnto him*, and not ſuffer their hearts to encline to her waies, or their feet to wander in her pathes: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Giue eare to mee my ſons, and liſten not to the harlot, whom God forbiddeth you to heare, and to whom if yee hearken, yee may euidently foreſee your owne ruine in this ſimple young mans deſtruction.

Let not thine heart decline to her waies, viz. doe not ſo much as in thy minde like of her leaud or wicked dealing, *and wander not in her pathes*, ſuffer not thy ſelfe to be beguiled by her to follow her courſes, or bee induced to conſent to her wicked motions.

Verſ. 26. *Shee hath caſt downe many wounded: yea, many ſtrong men haue been ſlaine by her.*

Verſ. 27.

Verſ. 27. *Her houſe is the way to hell, going downe to the chambers of death.*

HE fortifieth his exhortation with reaſons: the one is the miſchiefe which ſhe hath done to others: the other is the certaine perill to all them that haunt her. The former he alleageth by way of preoccupation, to preuent a ſhift of him that is vnwilling to be admoniſhed, and take warning by the example formerly produced: *Obiect.* It was but one mans hap and misfortune to ſpeed ſo ill (ſaith he) I will not be diſcouraged by the hard ſucceſſe of one, or of a few. *Anſw.* She hath been hurtfull to diuers, *many haue been caſt downe and wounded by her*, vtterly ouerthrowne and ſpoiled in their ſtate, credit, ſoule and body. *Obiect.* But a few ſimple fellowes, weake men, of no parts, wanting wit to look vnto themſelues, or power to maintaine their owne ſafety. *Anſw.* *Yea, many ſtrong men haue been ſlaine by her*, whereof one amongſt the reſt was *Samſon*, &c. To ſhew the certainty of the perill, hee ſaith, *her houſe is the way to hell*: touching which, ſee chap. 2. 18. and chap. 5. 5.

CHAPTER. VIII.

Verſ. 1. *Doth not Wiſedome crie? and Vnderſtanding vtter her voice?*

Verſ. 2. *She ſtandeth in the toppes of the high places, in the way, in the places of the pathes.*

Verſ. 3. *Shee crieth at the gates, at the entrie of the city, at the comming in of the doores.*

HAuing in the former chapter dehorted from the ſinne of adultery, and therin deſcribed the harlot with her entiſing ſpeeches, and ſet downe the effects therof: he now oppoſeth wiſdome to the harlot, her doctrine to the harlots enticements, and the effects of the one to the effects of the other:

ther: where wee are to obserue, first, what preparation shee makes to this businesse of instruction, in these three verses: secondly, the tenour of her oration and speech, whereby shee endeauoureth to perswade and instruct men in the rest that follow. For preparation she addresseth her selfe to be most audible, and easie to be heard, and vseth the best meanes to haue an auditorie, and many to heare her. Her care to bee heard is argued by the earnestnesse of her calling, and as it were the contention of her speech, in that she is said to *cry, and vtter her voice*, because she knoweth that her matter is good, and most necessary, and mens eares very deafe towards her, but wide open to all words of follie, whereby the heart may bee poysoned and infected, and therefore she doth not deale indicatiuely, and by way of affirmation, but interrogatiuely, and by way of expostulation, *doth not wisedome crie?* which is as if shee should say, I demand of you, answere mee out of your knowledge and experience, whereas ye hearken to follie, and wicked men, and sinfull women entising and alluring to euill, is it because ye are not taught, and called on by *wisedome*, by the sonne of God in his ministers and seruants? Will ye then leaue a reuerent matrone, and hearken to a filthy strumpet? will yee forsake the Ministers of God, and listen to seducers, and impostours, the ministers of Satan? For prouiding of auditors she presenteth her selfe to the congregations and publike assemblies, by the ministery of the word shee publisheth her counsels, and promises in the Churches, and meetings of Christians, and this he expresseth by a simile taken from the maner of the ciuill state, as the Magistrate causeth his proclamations to be promulgated in most publike places, where the Herald or cryer may be aboue the rest, and bee best seene and heard, where is greatest frequencie and concourse of people, as in waies whereby multitudes passe, and in the market place, and the gates of cities, especially where they were wont to keepe their Courts, and Sessions, and came together for all matters of great importance. See chap. 1. 20. 21.

Verſ. 4. *Vnto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the ſons of men.*

Verſ. 5. *O ye ſimple, vnderſtand wiſedome; and ye fooles be of an vnderſtanding heart.*

IN this oration the Lord Ieſus in the perſon of wiſdome, firſt commendeth his doctrine to the twelfth verſe. Secondly, deſcribeth his owne holineſſe, to the two and thirtieth verſe. Thirdly, maketh application of all vnto his people, from thence to the end of the chapter.

That his doctrine may be the better accepted, and worke the more effectually, hee directeth his ſpeech to the ſubiects thereof, the perſons whom he dealeth with, perſwading them to be attentiue vnto it. And then he deſcribeth by the adioynt of their conditions, as in reſpect of their outward ſtate ſome of them are more noble, and of higher degree, called *men*, in ſuch a word as many times ſignifieth their greatneſſe, as thoſe that are acquainted with the tongue wherein this Scripture is written doe well vnderſtand: as in the fourth Pſalme, *O yee ſonnes of men, viz.* O ye mighty perſonages, *how long will yee turne, &c.* Some baſe, as the word doth alwaies intend when it is ioyned with that before ſpoken of, which ſignifieth excellency, as it is vſed in the 49. Pſalme. *Both high and low*, both ſonnes of men, and ſonnes of *Adam*, ſaith the Hebrew text: and the words follow in the ſame place doe interpret his meaning: *both rich and poore.* Againe, ſome of them are prudent and wiſe, ſome of them are cleane contrary. Of them he maketh two ſorts: *ſimple ones*, ſuch as are ſetled in no one opinion, but are eaſily carried any whither, as a feather with a puffe of wind, and *fooles*, which are ſuch as hauing entred into a falſe opinion, or euill courſe of life, will with very great difficultie be drawne from it, or not at all, vnleſſe the Lord put to his mercifull hand and reclaime them. And yet is the caſe of neither of them deſperate, for it is not impoſſible for the ſpirit of God to eſtabliſh the ſimple with wiſedome, and to make the foole to be of *an vnderſtanding heart*: for the precept

cept of God commanding them to be such, containeth in it a promise for their encouragement, that if they will not be wilfull they shall be framed to be such. See chap. 1. vers. 22. 23.

Negidim. Vers. 6. *Heare, for I will speake of excellent things, and the opening of my lips of right things.*

HEre he beginneth to set forth his doctrine by the worthinesse and soundnesse of it. For the former he saith, he will speake *of excellent things*: the word signifieth *Princes, viz.* principall sayings and sentences, as far excelling others, as Princes doe inferiour persons. For the latter hee telleth vs, that *the opening of his mouth*, that which he had vttered by it, *is of right things*, which are called right, righteousnesse, or straitnesse, because they leade vs directly to eternall life and happinesse, without any turning either to the right hand or to the left: and it is set downe in the abstract, being *rightnesse*, rather then *right*, and in the plural number, being called rightnesses, rather then rightnesse, to preferre it for the singular vertue and holinesse, before all humane words and writings: for they are altogether crooked, or haue some crookednesse in them, or are imperfect in measure of puritie, which in this is most perfect, compleat, and absolute.

Vers. 7. *For my mouth shall speake the truth, and wickednes is abomination to my lips.*

HE maketh good his generall assertion by the enumeration of perticular adiuncts wherewith his doctrine is graced, thereby first prouing it to be sound and right, in this verse, and the two next following, and then to be worthie and excellent, in the tenth, and eleuenth verses. The first of these is verity; he saith that his *mouth*, and the instruments therein contained, the palat by name, (by which the voyce is framed) put for the person speaking, *shall speake the truth*, or the whole truth, an heauenly truth, a diuine truth: whereas other writings are either altogether vntrue, or haue vntruthes mixed with

with truthes, or at leaſt containe but an humane truth, not equall to this which hath light without darkeneſſe, and verity without faſhood, and nothing but that which is celeſtiall, and ſuggeſted by Gods holy ſpirit, *and wickedneſſe is an abomination to my lips:* he cleereth and confirmeth this by the contrarie, which is lying, in ſtead whereof hee nameth wickedneſſe, which hee ſaith his lips abhorre, *viz.* hee doth ſo abhorre it, and hath it in ſuch deteſtation, as that it is impoſſible it ſhould proceed out of his lips.

Verſe 8. *All the words of my mouth* are *righteouſnes*, there is *nothing froward, or peruerſe in them.*

THe ſecond is iuſtice, or righteouſneſſe, *all* that hee commandeth is lawfull and good, all that he forbiddeth is vnlawfull and euill; all that he promiſeth is equall to be performed, all that he threatneth is worthie to he executed: and this he maketh cleere by the contrary, *there is nothing froward or peruerſe in them*, nothing that is wicked and vngodly is affirmed, or enioyed, or allowed, or cloked, or any manner of way, or for any purpoſe pronounced and vttered therewith.

Verſ. 9. *They are all plaine to him that vnderſtandeth; and right to them that finde knowledge.* *Necochim.*

THe third is perſpicuity, and eaſineſſe to bee apprehended, and ſo by the aſſiſtance of Gods ſpirit not hard to bee practiſed: which is ſet forth by a compariſon of that which is placed right ouer againſt a mã, or by a way that lyeth directly before a mans eyes, yet this ſaying is limited by the ſubiects, all promiſcuouſly diſcerne not this, for they are very obſcure to many, but ſuch as are iuditious, which imbrace the doctrine of wiſedome, which haue ſought vnderſtanding at wiſdomes ſchoole, and there found it, theſe ſee the euidence and cleereneſſe of Gods holy counſels, and heauenly myſteries, becauſe they are *reuealed vnto them by his ſpirit*, which none

ſhall

ſhall faile to receiue that ſeriouſly, and in vprightneſſe ſeeke him in his word, and the miniſtery thereof.

Verſ.10. *Receiue mine inſtruction, and not ſiluer; and knowledge rather then choyce gold.*

Verſ.11. *For wiſdome is better then rubies: and all things that may be deſired are not to be compared with her.*

HE proueth the excellency, pretiouſneſſe, and delights of his doctrine by compariſon, with *ſiluer and gold*, and whatſoeuer deſireable things; and therefore as it is more excellent then they, ſo wee ought to preferre it before them by ſetting our deſire more vpon it, and taking more paines for it, then for any, or all of them. *Receiue mine inſtruction* (ſaith he) *and not ſiluer, viz.* get it with greater induſtrie then thou wouldeſt vſe for ſiluer, as may appeare by that which followeth: for it is not his purpoſe here to condemne ſiluer altogether, but to put it behinde grace, whereunto it is ſo farre inferiour, which is meant alſo of the gold and Iems, &c. yet in ſome caſe the words may litterally be vnderſtood, as if inſtruction and *ſiluer* cannot be both poſſeſſed together; then ſaith he, *Receiue mine inſtruction, and not ſiluer*, bee ſure to enrich thy ſoule, how poore ſoeuer thou be in thine eſtate. The Hebrewes were commended by the Apoſtle for obeying this precept, and following this counſell, who *ſuffered with ioy the ſpoyling of all their goods, knowing that they had a better an enduring ſubſtance in heauen.* For which ſee chap. 3.14.15.

Gnormah. Verſ.12. *I wiſedome dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of wittie inuentions.*

OVr Sauiour hauing ſo largely and ſo worthily extolled his word and Goſpell, doth encourage his people to imbrace the ſame according to his direction, by that al-ſufficiencie which is in him, both to informe them with knowledge and vnderſtanding, and to performe all his promiſes which he doth make vnto them; and firſt he telleth them for their com-

fort

fort that he is not onely wiſe, but wiſedome it ſelfe, euen the wiſedome of God: he is alſo goodneſſe, hee is alſo power, as the Apoſtle teſtifieth. But here he mentioneth this attribute, and aſſumeth this title, and partly becauſe his Goſpell, and miniſtery, is commonly of *fooles* condemned of folly, and partly becauſe it is his office to bee the teacher of his Church, it belongeth vnto him to dictate all the Scriptures, and to inſpire the Prophets and holy men for the writing of them: it belongeth to him to qualifie all his Miniſters, whether Apoſtles, or Prophets, or Euangeliſts, or Paſtours, or Teachers, and to giue them gifts of knowledge fit for their calling: it belongeth to him to illuminate the minds of his ſeruants, and to worke the effect of his miniſtery within them. Being then the promptuarie and treaſurie of wiſedome for the vſe of the whole Church, and euery member thereof, in all ages and places, hee animateth them by this, that his ſtore of wiſedome can neuer be exhauſted, becauſe hee not onely hath great ſtore thereof, but is it, and that in an infinite perfection. *I dwell with prudence*, the word tranſlated *prudence* is often taken in the euill part, for craft and ſubtilty, and many times in the good part, eſpecially in this booke: as in the firſt chapter, and 4. verſe: *to giue ſharpeneſſe of wit, &c.* And ſo it is here, for holy diſcretion whereby a man is directed what to do, and what to leaue vndone: where to go, & where to ſtand ſtill: where to ſpeake, and when to bee ſilent: but eſpecially to auoide the ſnares which the diuell, the world, and our owne corruption haue ſet for vs: this doth Chriſt not onely for himſelfe, but for the vſe of his people, which is his inheritance and euerlaſting poſſeſſion. The word *inhabiting*, is vſed in like ſenſe in the propheſie of *Iſaiah. For thus ſaith the high and loftie one, that inhabiteth eternity: I finde out*, not onely in my ſelfe, but alſo cauſe them that reuerence and eſteeme me, to ſeeke and finde wittie *inuentions*, ſuch aduiſed and conſiderate cogitations, as whereby my ſeruants doe not only procure good to themſelues, but preuent and hinder the euils which their enemies ſeeke to bring vpon them. 1.Cor.1.24. Iſa.57.15.

Verſ. 13.

Verſe 13. *The feare of the Lord* is *to hate euill: pride, and arrogancie, the euill way, and a froward mouth doe I hate.*

HE commendeth this prudence and wiſedome by the gracious fruite of it, (as may be collected from the coherence) *the feare of God*, wherewith Chriſt as Mediatour, and our Sauiour, was moſt plentifully inriched in his owne perſon, according as *Iſaiah* prophecied of him: *The ſpirit of the Lord ſhall reſt vpon him, the ſpirit of wiſedome, and vnderſtanding: the ſpirit of counſell, and might, the ſpirit of knowledge, and the feare of the Lord.* With the ſame alſo doth he indue the members of his myſticall body, and therein a principall part of their wiſedome doth conſiſt, as he hath formerly teſtified: *The feare of the Lord is the beginning of wiſedome.* And as the feare of the Lord is ſo bleſſed a fruite of wiſedome, ſo is the hatred of ſinne as notable an effect of that: which hee ſetteth foorth by the particuler ſubiects of thoſe odious vices, which men ought to abhorre, and his people by vertue of this feare ſhall be made to abhorre in that manner (though not in ſo full meaſure) as hee himſelfe doth abhorre them. *The feare of the Lord is to hate enill:* Sound religion and godlineſſe (whereof reuerence or the feare of the Lord is one of the principall parts) worketh in thoſe who are furniſhed therewith, *the hatred of euill*, what kinde ſoeuer it bee, whether it bee of heart, or behauiour: whether it bee of word, or action: whether it bee of omiſſion, or practiſe: whether it be againſt the firſt table of the law, or ſecond: and by ſpeciall name theſe that follow, *Pride, and arrogancie*, being loathſome corruptions, arguing the ſoule, wherein they raigne, to be voide of all ſenſe of ſinne, and baniſhing all true loue from among men, there is no ſound pietie, or grace, where they beare ſway, and grace bringeth lowlineſſe, and cauſeth an humble ſpirit. *The euill way:* whereby he meaneth all euill deedes which wicked men walke in, euen as the traueller doth in his way, *and the froward mouth*, which vſually ſpeaketh peruerſe things againſt God, or man, or both, *doe I hate*, both as God euerlaſting, the ſecond

Prou.1.7.

second person in trinitie, and as Mediatour clothed with mans nature, according to the saying of the Prophet, *Thou louest righteousnes, and hatest iniquitie, because God, euen thy God hath annointed thee with the oyle of gladnesse aboue thy fellowes.* Psal. 45. 7. Our Sauiour professeth this as rendring a reason why his Gospell and grace should cause his people to hate euill, and that is, because hee himselfe doth, who will conforme, and make them like vnto himselfe, he is the fountaine from whence the streames of euery good grace shall be deriued to their soules.

Verse 14. *Counsell is mine, and sound wisedome: I am vnderstanding, I haue strength.*

HE proceedeth and goeth forward in setting foorth his marueilous, abundant, yea absolute and infinite wisedome: and first he addeth, that *counsell* is his, (for hee is both of the priuie counsell of his Father, and the onely aduiser of his Church, all policie without him is follie, all the directions which hee giueth not are seducements, and misleadings) and therefore the Prophet calleth him *Wonderfull, Counsellour, and sound wisedome*; the word signifieth *substance*, meaning substantiall aduice and counsell, such as neuer faileth: *I am vnderstanding*; he changeth his phrase to teach that counsell and wisedome are so his, that they are essentiall in him, and perfect, without increase, decrease, or mutation: to this hee adioyneth another attribute, *I haue strength*; which is here mentioned, to shew that hee hath power to execute his purposes and counsels: and *Isaiah* calling him *Wonderfull, Counsellour,* Isai. 9. 6. titleth him also *the mightie God:* and by this he giueth his seruants to vnderstand that he is omnipotent, to make supplie of all their wants, minister defence against all their perils: there is no good thing which he cannot performe to them; there is no euill or hurt which he cannot keepe from them.

Tushiyah.

Verse 15. *By mee Kings raigne, and Princes decrees iustice.*

Verse 16. *By me Princes rule, and Nobles, euen all the Iudges of the earth.*

IN that which went before Christ hath declared what he is, and what he hath, how well he is stored with all sufficiency, and perfection for the vse of his people, and creatures: and now he beginneth to shew what he doth, and what he giueth, how hee imployeth his wisedome and power for the good of mankinde in these two verses; and what blessings and fauours he bestoweth vpon his owne people and seruants, in all that follow to the two and twentieth verse. For the good and benefit of mankinde he saith that by him *Kings raigne*, &c. signifying that hee is the author of all authoritie, which is very necessarie for the preseruation and welfare of humane societie: there is no power, or potentate, (whether they bee soueraignes, or subordinate ministers of iustice) but they are from him, as the Apostle saith, and by his secret assistance and prouidence they discharge their functions. For whether they doe wisely consult or determine what to doe in the states they gouerne, or mightily execute that they haue decreed, they doe it all by him, qualifying them with these gifts of prouidence, iustice, courage, power, and other such like, whereby they are fitted for their places: by him, and his secret disposing, they rise to their dignities: by him, and by his protecting hand, they are supported, and defended in their offices, that they bee not exposed to the violence of tumults and rebellions, and the outrage of the disordered multitude: nor cut off by the conspiracies and treacheries of dissembling traytors: by him they sit on their thrones, or benches, and there pronounce sentence, handle matters of state, execute lawes, and determine all causes. And this is not so in the Church alone, and where religion is established, but amongst Idolaters, amongst Infidels, and Heathen, in all the *earth*, in all the world, where there is any gouernment: if there bee any good policie, or equitie amongst them, it proceedeth from him, and is by his appointment.

Rom. 13. 1.

Verſe 17. *I loue them that loue me: and they that ſeeke me early ſhall finde me.*

IN the former two verſes he mentioneth his prouident care in a general manner for all ſtates, in ſetting vp, and eſtabliſhing gouernours and rulers for their defence and gouernment, and thereby they are preſerued in peace and ſafetie, and haue protection from the iniuries which otherwiſe one would offer to another: now more ſpecially hee profeſſeth his grace, mercie, and goodneſſe, vnto his ſeruants, which religiouſly and holily worſhip him; and firſt he noteth the principal cauſe thereof which is on his part, viz. *his owne loue:* for this is the roote, and fountaine of all his fauours to vs: and ſecondly, the mouing cauſe (though not meritorious) which is on our part, and that is, our *loue* toward him, which proceedeth from his vnto vs, and being commanded by his law, hath a promiſe of recompence in his Goſpell. And both of theſe are accompanied with gracious effects as well for faithfull endeuour to haue communion with him, as for happie ſucceſſe to attaine thereunto: *they that ſeeke me early*, which pray vnto me, labour to finde me in my word, and frequent all religious exerciſes painfully, carefully, and diligently, as men vſe to riſe betime in the morning, and apply themſelues earneſtly to deale in buſines of greateſt moment and importance: *ſhall find me*, obtaine my graces, and enioy the comfort of my merits, preſence, and fauour.

Verſe 18. *Riches and honour are with me, yea durable riches, and righteouſnes.*

Verſe 19. *My fruite is better then gold, then fine gold, and my reuennues then choice ſiluer.*

HE amplifieth the ſucceſſe of *finding* him, by the commoditie which they ſhall obtaine with him, and that is ſpirituall and heauenly endowments, which hee compareth, and preferreth before the moſt deſirable benefits and fortunes (as

they vse to tearme them) of this life, and that is *riches, and honour*, which almost all do most greedily affect, & labour for, they shal be inriched with such wealth, and aduanced to that glorie which incomparably surpasseth all earthly substance and dignities in euery respect, but especially in two: first, the riches and preferment of this life are transitorie and vncertaine: a man may be wealthie to day, and needie to morrow: now a great man, and shortly after of no reputation: much applauded for the present, and within a short while inuelghed against, or derided: but these riches are permanent, and *durable*, such as neither the rust can fret, nor the moth consume: and so is this honour also not subiect to mutabilitie, and losse. Secondly, the goods and preferments of this world are gotten, or kept many times with much iniustice, and wrong; and therefore the one sort of them in stead of both are called riches of iniquitie: but righteousnesse doth euermore so season these treasures, and promotions of grace, that no such imputations can be laid vpon them, and therefore for their incomparable excellencie he doth againe (as he had often before) extoll them aboue those things which most mens affections doe greatliest dote after, and their minds doe most highly esteeme of, namely, gold and siluer, the very gods of all worldlings: *my fruite*, the gifts and graces which grow from the sappe of my spirit, *is better then gold, yea then fine gold, and my reuennues*, which I giue to be enioyed of them which enioy me, *is better then choice siluer*, though it haue been neuer so often fined and tried.

Luke 16.

Verse 20. *I leade in the way of righteousnes, in the midst of the paths of iudgement.*

HE doth explane his owne words, and interpreteth his *riches*, his *fruite*, and *reuennues*, &c. to be sanctification of life, together with the internall graces of the soule. *I cause to walke in the way of righteousnes*; I teach men which embrace me by my word, and stirre them vp by my spirit, *to denie vngodlinesse, and worldly lusts, and to liue soberly, righteously, and*

godly in this present world, &c. *and in the midst of the paths of iudgement*, without going on either hand, but in the plaine way of vprightnes. His intent is not here to put men in hope of a perfection in this life, or to charge all those to haue no communion with him which somtimes swarue from the right way, and fall into iniustice, but to promise direction to them that desire the right way, and to comfort them that proceede on in sinceritie (though not in fulnes of puritie and goodnes) and when sinfulnes is not the way wherein they walk, though sometimes they misse their way, and stray aside, which when they doe, he will shew them their errours, rebuke their hearts, and reduce them to the right way according to his promise: *And thine eares shall heare a word behinde thee, saying, This is the way walke in it, when thou turnest to the right hand, and when thou turnest to the left.* Esai. 30. 21.

Verse 21. *That I may cause them that loue me, to inherit substance: and I will fill their treasures.*

LAstly, the excellencie, and profitablenes of the *righteousnes*, in the former verse promised, hee proueth by the end or effect of it which is to make vs perfectly happie: and this he amplifieth first, from the matter of it, that it is solid, stable, and firme, calling it *substance*, or that which is, as if all other things were rather shadowes and shewes, then matter of substance. Secondly, by the perpetuitie of it, with one propertie in it, noted in the word *inherit*, as if all other things were but borrowed wares, and moueables, or leases at the best, and this onely and properly our owne, and a matter of *inheritance*. Thirdly, by the fulnes and plenty of it, *I will fill their treasures*, as if we had al other things deliuered vs sparingly, and in smaller number, waight, and measure; but this more liberally, and with farre more large and ample copiousnes. Much of this is againe confirmed by him in the new Testament, where hee compareth the earth to a thing that hath no stay, and heauen to an *euerlasting habitation*; and calleth the earthly estate the least, and the heauenly the greatest commodities of the world

he tearmeth the *vnrighteous Mammon*: and possessions aboue, the *true treasure*.

Verse 22. *Iehouah hath possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his workes of old.*

THe sonne of God proceeding to manifest himselfe, and to publish the knowledge of his diuine nature, setteth foorth both the eternitie of his being to the 30. verse, and of his happinesse, to the 32. verse.

The eternitie of his being is proued by this, that hee was before the creation, to the 26. verse, at it, to the 30. verse. Now he saith, *Iehouah possessed me in the beginning of his way*: I the eternall word of God was with God the Father at *the beginning of his way*, when by the creation of all things hee was about to giue manifest and plaine testimonies of his Maiestie, and I was of one and the selfesame essence with him, and the holy Spirit, he then *possessed me*, as his Son, and as his wisdome, *before his workes of old*, before any thing that euer he made, euen those which were first, and of all others most ancient.

Vers. 23. *I was set vp from euerlasting, from the beginning, or euer the earth was.*

SO much, as in the lumpe, or chaos: by the eternall decree of God I was ordained, and had as sure a calling, as if I had been annointed to the office of Kingdome, Priesthood, and Prophecie, to bee Mediatour for, and head of the Church in time to be founded, and euerlastingly to be saued.

Verse 24. *When there were no depths I was begotten: when there were no fountaines springing with water.*

Verse 25. *Before the mountaines were setled: before the hils was I begotten.*

WHen *there were no depths was I begotten*, and to speak after the mannet of men, brought foorth: I had my person

perſon from the perſon of my Father from all eternity, and to continue for euer.

The perticulars of the creation here reckoned vp are very worthie to bee conſidered, as firſt the *depthes*, that is to ſay, channels wherein the ſeas and riuers runne, and wherein the ſtanding waters make their abode, all which are receptacles, and as it were the veſſels and ciſternes wherein the waters are contained, which otherwiſe would ouerflow the earth, and make it vnfit both for man, and other beaſts to liue vpon: ſecondly, the *fountaines*, which are as the eyes (for ſo the Hebrew word ſignifieth) through which the ſeas doe looke out here and there among the hils; and as the iſſues of the ſeas by which they ſend forth waters, which being deliuered from their ſalt and brackiſh taſte, by being ſtrained through the earth, ſerue men, and other creatures for ſingular and infinite vſes, of moiſtening, cooling, and cleanſing, &c. And becauſe they are ſo vſeful, God doth as well repleniſh them with plentie of water, wherewith it is ſaid here, they *abound*, or be great with: the ſimilitude is taken from female liuing creatures, which in competent time after their conception, are ready to bring forth their young which they goe with. *Mangianoth.* *Cholalti.*

The third is the *mountaines*, of which hee ſaith, that they are *ſetled*, the Hebrew word ſaith, *drowned:* that is to ſay, laid ſo deepely, that the rootes and bottomes of them lye in the ſeas: and the leſſer *hils* alſo, as in the reſt, his glorious workemanſhip appeareth.

Verſ. 26. *While as yet he had not created the earth, nor the fields, nor the height of the duſt of the earth.*

THe next (after mention of the earth made and perfited) is the *open field*, or countrey, *the plaine*, or champion, which is fit for corne, graſſe, trauelling, carriage, &c. hee calleth theſe the *height, or top of the duſt of the world.* The word ſignifieth *the head*, meaning the moſt delicate or principall parts of the earth, which by a *Menonymie*, or *Synecdoche*, hee calleth the *duſt of the world.* *Roaſh.*

Thus we see Christ preferring himselfe in priority of time, and consequently in euery other respect before all creatures, where the principall thing which hee professeth concerning himselfe are his eternall communion with his father, who euer hath, and doth enioy him, and his chiefe *possession*, and next his eternall designation to the office of the Mediatorship: lastly, his eternall generation to be the sonne of God. Wee see also the creatures with whom he doth compare himselfe, generally the whole earth, first imperfect, v. 23. secondly finished, v. 26 and perticularly the *depthes, springs, hils, fields, &c.* And all is in effect as if he should say, *Iehouah possessed me, in and before the beginning of his way:* then when he begun to manifest and make himselfe knowne by the creation of the *world*, before he wrought any of his workes, before hee could say [*then*] that is, before all time: and from the very beginning I was annointed, and *set vp*, hauing wonderfull power and authority with him: more perticularly, when there was yet no earth, that is, no masse of water, nor earth, which is the matter of all things; before there was any *depth*, which is one part of that masse, *was I begotten:* before there were any *fountaines laden with water*; *before* the great *mountaines*, which are as it were the foundation of the dry land were *fixed:* and before the lesser *hils was I borne*, and had my being; before the *Lord* had made the *earth*, or the fields abroad, and the most commodious, delightfull and goodly places of the *world*.

Vers. 27. *When he prepared the heauens, I was there: when he set a compasse on the face of the depthes.*

Vers. 28. *When hee established the clouds aboue: when hee established the fountaines of the depth:*

Vers. 29. *When he gaue to the sea his decree, that the waters should not passe his commandement: when he appointed the foundation of the earth.*

IN the premises our Sauiour Christ declareth that hee in his existence, nature, office, and person was eternally before the creation, and in these verses that he was present at the creation

on: wherein we muſt know that he was alſo an agent, and fellow-worker with the father, and ſo much is teſtified in the Scriptures: for S. *Iohn* ſaith, *In the beginning was that word, and that word was with God, and that word was God. The ſame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by it, and without it was made nothing that was made.* And Saint *Paul* agreeth with him in the ſame point: *By him were all things created that are in heauen or earth, viſible or inuiſible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt.* And herein he relateth the workes of God, firſt in the heauen; ſecondly, in the aire; thirdly, in the waters; and laſtly, in the earth. Touching the firſt, it is ſaid that he *prepared the heauens, viz.* God the Father both made and garniſhed them in a beautifull manner: and for the largeneſſe and circuit of them it is ſaid, *hee ſet them to compaſſe the face of the depth, viz.* to ſurround and encompaſſe all the inferiour bodies, both of the water and earth; and of himſelfe, that *he was there*, not as an idle ſpectator, but as a ioynt-worker, as we haue alreadie proued. Touching the ſecond it is ſaid, that *he eſtabliſhed the clouds, viz.* appointed and ſet them by the word of his power in the firmament, that they might not breake, nor fall downe, or be diſſolued vntimely and vnſeaſonablie, but kept and preſerued there, vntill hee would haue them to powre downe their dew, or raine.

Ioh.1.1.2.3.

Col.1.16.17.

Touching the third, he firſt mentioneth the waters within the earth, *viz.* the great depths, almoſt bottomleſſe gulphes; and of theſe it is ſaid, that hee *eſtabliſhed the fountaines of the deepe*, keeping them within the bounds and compaſſes which he had ſet them below in the ground, and not to breake out immoderately, to the annoyance of the earth, for the vſe and benefit whereto they were created: and ſecondly hee ſpecifieth the waters vpon the earth, to which, becauſe they would be vnrulie, and ouerwhelme the dry land, and all the creatures vpon it, he gaue *his decree* for the bounds and liſts of the ſame, how farre it ſhould goe, and how farre it ſhould not goe, that the waters thereof ſhould not paſſe his *commandment*, exceed the

limits

limits wherewith he had bounded them: hee vseth a *Prosopopeia*, ascribing a person to the seas, and compareth them to seruants, or subiects which receiue commands from their superiour. The like saying is also vttered by the Lord himselfe, in *Iob*, *Who hath shut vp the sea with doores when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the wombe? when I brake vp for it my decreed place, and set barres and doores; and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further; and heere shall thy proud waues be stayed.* Touching the last, it is said, *he appointed the foundations of the earth, viz.* made it so firme & stable, that it should perpetually remaine immoueable. The sense of all this is, as if he should haue said, When *Iehouah* made and garnished the heauens, and set them as a circle drawne about the earth, then, and there was I working and framing them with him: when hee fastened the clouds aboue, and fountaines which are so strong, as, though the waters of the deepe bee great and violent, yet are they not broken vp: likewise when hee made the seas, and appointed bounds and limits thereunto by a statute and law, beyond which it cannot passe, and when hee placed the earth, that, although it hang wonderfully vpon nothing, yet is so firme and immoueable, as if it were raised vpon a sure and strong *foundation*, answerable to the building: when all these things were done, then, and there was I, not as to looke vpon them, but to associate the Father, and the holy Ghost in working.

Iob 38.8. 10.11.

Vers. 30. *Then was I by him, as one brought vp with him: and I was daily his delight, reioycing alway before him.*

Vers. 31. *Reioycing in the habitable part of the earth: my delights were in the sons of men.*

HAuing thus set forth and proued his eternity, he proceedeth to set forth his felicity, partly in the delight which he both gaue to his Father, and receiued from him before the world: wherein also is to be vnderstood that the holy Spirit, the third person in Trinity, communicateth with them both: and partly in the delight which since the world was made hee taketh

taketh in the world generally, and ſpecially in the ſonnes of men. The former is ſet downe in borrowed ſpeeches, wherein applying himſelfe to our capacity, hee compareth himſelfe to an nurſling, ſmiling and laughing with his nurſe; and to a little child, ſporting & playing before his father. The latter is ſet downe, firſt, in one of the ſame borrowed ſpeeches, *laughing*, and *ſporting in the habituall part of the earth*, that is, taking pleaſure in the creatures, beholding therein the fruit of the moſt abſolute wiſedome, power, and goodneſſe of the whole Trinitie. And ſecondly in plainer ſpeech, *my delights*, yea my double delight is in the ſonnes of men, as they were all firſt formed and faſhioned in *Adam*, bearing before his fall the ſtampe and print of Gods image, for wiſedome, holineſſe, and righteouſneſſe; and foreſeeing, and preordaining that glorious eſtate whereunto they were to be reſtored after mans fall, to bee made like vnto himſelfe, and to bee incorporated into him, and with him, by the merit of his ſufferings, and obedience, together with the efficacie of his ſpirit, and grace to inherit holineſſe, honour, and immortality for euer.

Amon. *Meſhacheketh.* *Shaguaſhnginai.*

Verſ. 32. *Now therefore, O ye children, hearken to me: for bleſſed are they that keepe my waies.*

WIſedome hauing propounded her heauenly doctrine, commeth now to make vſe of it, and to apply it by exhortation to her children. The ſumme of her exhortation is, that for as much as ſhee is ſo excellent, as hath been afore deliuered; therefore they ſhould hearken vnto her, and walke in her waies; heare her doctrine, and continue in her precepts.

And in this exhortation hee propoſeth { A dutie: / A reaſon of it { Firſt, briefly ſet downe. / Then more at large laid forth. }

The dutie is briefly ſet down in theſe words; *My children, hearken to mee*: the dutie is inferred vpon the premiſes, *now therefore*: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Wherefore, ſeeing the matter

ter whereof I speake is so excellent; seeing all wisedome, knowledge, counsell, strength, &c. are mine, & I bestow them with riches, and honours also on those that loue mee, seeing I am the eternall Sonne of God, Creator of the world; perfectly happy in my selfe, and yet delighting in the sons of men, it concerneth you to hearken vnto me.

Vnto this he addeth a reason taken from the effect, *blessed are they that keepe my waies:* which is an argument of greatest weight and force that can be vsed. For what is it that all men seeke but happinesse?

Vers. 33. *Heare instruction, and be wise, refuse it not.*

HAuing thus briefly laid downe the exhortation, and the promise; he amplifieth both: and first the exhortation, wherein he perswadeth to three things: the first is, that wee *heare instruction*, because they that will hearken to him must heare his instructions, yea rebukes and corrections also (if need so require) for herein especially she maketh triall of our obedience. A bastard will after a sort sometimes heare doctrine and consolation; but he is a naturall sonne of wisdome that will hearken to her checkes and reproofes. The second is, *and be wise*, which is the effect of Wisdomes instruction, and reprehension: for the word of God is able to make vs wise to saluation; and therefore aduising to be wise, he inciteth vs to those meanes whereby we may attaine vnto wisedome. The third is, *refuse not*; the word signifieth both *to put away*, and *to fall away*, or to make a defection. It is a great indignity offred vnto Wisedome, to refuse and put her away, when shee offereth her selfe to vs in her instructions, and worthie are they to perish in their follie that shall so doe: but it is yet a more vnworthie thing, hauing in some sort yeelded to her, to reuolt from her, and cast her off; for she neuer giueth to any man the least cause so to deale with her.

Tiphragnu.

Vers. 34.

Vers. 34. *Blessed is the man that heareth mee: watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doores.*

HEre he amplifieth the promise, first affirming that hee is *blessed* that performeth the dutie of hearing wisedome, which he proueth by the reward, in the next verse, and by the contrary in the last. And first, in this verse hee describeth that attention and hearing of wisedome by the manner of it, prescribing therein assiduity, and continuall attendance by a comparison taken from the custome of clients and suters, who waite day by day, and houre by houre, at the gates of Princes, Councellors, and other great men, to exhibite their petitions and to get their causes fauoured, heard, and ended, which is the constant exercise of religious seruices.

Vers. 35. *For who so findeth me, findeth life; and shall obtaine fauour of the Lord.*

THe reward promised to such as hearken vnto wisedome: for their blessednesse is *life* it selfe. *Hee that findeth me:* which attaineth to the sound and sauing knowledge of mee with faith, and layeth hold on me by faith, and communicateth of my graces by the spirit, *findeth life, viz.* both enioyeth the certaine assurance and comfort of eternall life: for, *I am*, saith he, *the resurrection and the life; I am the way, the truth, and the life:* he addeth that such doe *get fauour of the Lord*, which is the cause of life before promised, and the very life of life it selfe, according to the saying of *Dauid, Thy louing kindnesse is better then life.* Ioh. 11.25. and Ioh. 14.16. Psal. 63.3.

Vers. 36. *But hee that sinneth against mee, wrongeth his owne soule; all they that hate me, loue death.*

LAstly, hee both cleereth and confirmeth his former promise by the contrary; where sinning against wisedome, is opposed to the hearkening to her, and finding of her. For

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no man findeth her not, but he that either wilfully refuseth to seeke her, or contumeliously reiecteth her, offering her selfe vnto him: and *wronging his owne soule*, is opposed to *finding of life*: for as the one is recompenced from Gods free gift, so the other is punished for his owne desert, and through his wilfulnes doth open iniurie and violence (as the word importeth) vnto himselfe, vnto his life, vnto his soule, by throwing both soule and bodie headlong into perdition, so that hee must needes be found accessarie to his owne death, destruction, and damnation. The same in effect is deliuered in other tearmes, in the latter part of the verse, where they that reiect wisdome are charged to *hate her*: (for indeed none but her enemies doe deny her entertainment) and they that labour not to find that euerlasting life, haue this imputation laid vpon them by wisedome (who knoweth all things, and can best iudge of euery thing) *to loue death*, which they doe in effect, though not in affections: for they loue the poyson of sinne which will bring death, the eating whereof is as sure as death: and in this sense the fondest parents which in extreame indulgence forbeare to giue their children correction, are said to *hate them*, because they doe the worke of hatred by neglecting the dutie of loue.

CHAPTER. IX.

THis Chapter doth containe a briefe recapitulation or summarie almost of all the former eight Chapters: containing, first, the holy instructions of wisedome, in the person of a Princesse or great Lady making a banquet. Secondly, the deceiueable and enticing flatterings of sinfulnes and folly, in the person of a smooth and guilefull harlot.

Verse

Verse 1. *Wisedome hath built her house, and hewen out her seuen pillars.*

WIsedome, or *wisedomes*] *viz.* The most absolute and soueraigne Wisedome, the Lord Iesus Christ, who is the perfect wisedome of his Father, (*hath built her house*) that is, the Church, which is so called, 1. Tim. 3. 15. (*and hewen out her seuen pillars*) that is, hath most firmely founded, and perpetually supporteth it with his owne hand: which is more powerfull for it, then many pillars and buttresses are to sustaine a materiall building: whereby also is intended, that the Churches safetie is accompanied with beautie, as hauing pillars hewen out and polished, and not made of rough stones without garnishing. And this the Lord doth, and publisheth, that his people should seek and serue him with boldnes, and hope, without dread of danger or contempt, as being called vnto a place so sure and glorious.

Verse 2. *She hath killed her victuals, mingled her wine, and prepared her table.*

MEntion was made before of wisedomes house, and the strength of it: and here of her hospitalitie and housekeeping in it; where heauenly things are represented by earthly, and the bountie and magnificence of the Lord, by the plentifull prouision of a liberal feast-maker. For the graces of his Spirit, by the ministerie of the word, are compared to daintie meates, and delicious wines, either spiced, or mingled with choice kindes of coole waters, whereby in those hot countries they were much refreshed. Whereunto is added the circumstance of readinesse, that there needeth no tarrance or long waiting, but all things are in order, and commodiously prepared for present refection of the guests. Our Sauiour Christ vttereth a like parable in the Gospell with the same circumstance, saying, *Tell them which are bidden; Behold, I haue prepared my dinner; mine oxen, and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come vnto the mariage.* This illustration of

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the Gospel by the resemblance of a sumptuous feast, and daintie cheare, is frequent in the Scriptures both as well in the old Testament as in the new: as for example, we may reade in the Isai. 25. 6. prophecie of *Isaiah*: *In this mountaine* (meaning his Church, according as he doth in this place) *shall the Lord of hoasts make to all people a feast of fat things; a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well resined.*

Verse 3. *She hath sent foorth her maides, and crieth vpon the highest places of the citie.*

IN the former words was shewed what preparation wisdom made for her feast at home, and in these what course she taketh to inuite the guests abroad. Her maides are sent forth as messengers into the streets, and gates and market place, which commonly are frequented with greatest multitude and concourse of people, to call as many as they can meete with: not that maides or matrons or any women are allowed to be ministers: but he prosecuteth the allegorie, euery parr of it correspondent & sutable to other. As Christ himselfe, vnderstood by wisedome, is compared to a Ladie: so his Prophets, Apostles, Pastors, and Teachers, are resembled to maides, which in regard of sex are most meete to waite vpon women. For in that place of *Matthew* where hee is said to be a King, that is, the feast-maker, his messengers are termed men-seruants, and not maides or women.

Verse 4. *Who so is simple let him come hither, and to him that is destitute of wisedome she speaketh.*

HEre is a description of the guests y. be meet for this feast, which in shew seeme most vnmeete, as being most vnlike the mistresse of the feast: and these are simple persons, destitute of spiritual vnderstanding, yet so as they feele the want of knowledge, and the weight of their ignorance, and leane no longer on worldly wisedome. For their case doth most of all require supplie considering their necessitie, and these will

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moſt greedily (as I may ſay) deuoure and eate of wiſedomes delicate inſtructions, and none will be more thankfull to acknowledge her fauours then they, as finding her ſo gratious and mercifull vnto them: contrary to the contrary ſort of ignorant perſons, whoſe blindnes cauſeth them to thinke that they are not blinde: and their affamiſhment hath vtterly killed their appetites, ſo that their ſoules doe loathe and abhorre all wholeſome foode; and therefore they take them for their greateſt enemies, who offer any reliefe vnto them.

Verſe 5. *Come and eate, and drinke of the wine that I haue mixed.*

THe exhortation which Wiſedome vttered by her maides is againe repeated, to expreſſe the ſerious deſire and true meaning of the meſſengers, and miſtris in calling of the gueſts; and to let them know alſo that as they are bidden by way of inuitation, ſo they are commanded by way of ſummons, and therefore to addreſſe themſelues thereunto with all expedition. And becauſe it is not their preſence onely that is required, but a profitable vſe-making of the vndeſerued fauour that is ſhewed vnto them, therfore they are before hand informed to what end they are ſent for; to eate and drinke of the delicates prepared: which is to receiue the merits and graces of Chriſt, with the promiſes of God, and to make them their own by faith, and perticular application.

Verſe 6. *Forſake the fooliſh, and liue ye, and walke in the way of wiſedome.*

NOw ſhe giueth rules of direction to them that were called, the better to fit them for her familie: as firſt for their companie, that ſince they are to haue ſocietie with the Saints in the Church, they are to ſeparate themſelues from the ſinners of the world. Whereunto ſhe perſwadeth them by the good effect enſuing, that the gaine of euerlaſting life will counternaile and ouerpoiſe the loſſe of all worldly and fleſhly friends.

The other is for conuerſation, that for as much as they are to dwell with wiſedome (for all the gueſts are domeſticall and of the houſhold) that therefore all their waies and behauiour be holy and agreeable to wiſedome.

Verſ. 7. *He that rebuketh a ſcorner, purchaſeth to himſelfe ſhame; he that rebuketh the wicked getteth himſelfe a blot.*

HItherto hath been ſhewed how the meſſage of ſaluation was ſent by Chriſt, and brought by his Miniſters: now here is declared how it is receiued of the people. And firſt, he bringeth ſuch as be vncapable of it, namely, deſperate wicked men, being altogether incurable, whom the Scripture tearmeth ſcorners. And theſe will attempt to blemiſh and ſhame all thoſe that ſhall admoniſh them. As charging them ſometimes with arrogancie, malice, indiſcretion and hypocriſie: ſometimes with ſchiſme, ſedition, couetouſneſſe, and other miſdemeanours: and if theſe imputations can take no hold on them, as grounded on no probability, then they fall vpon their meane eſtate, and parentage, and education: for ſo they dealt with the Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe: Mat. 13.35. *Is not this the Carpenters Son, is not his mother called Marie?*

Verſ. 8. *Rebuke not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee, &c.*

IN the former verſe was ſhewed, how ſcorners vſe to deale with them that rebuke them: and here the holy Ghoſt teacheth how we muſt deale with ſcorners: namely, ſithence we ſhall needleſſelie ſtirre vp hatred againſt our ſelues, and performe no good to them, that therefore wee deſiſt from them, and let them alone. Wherein notwithſtanding good diſcretion is to be vſed, that none which may bee corrigible bee reiected for a ſcorner, but ſuch as vpon ſufficient triall haue declared themſelues by a continued obſtinacie to be ſo. And in this caſe alſo though priuate reproofes are to bee ſpared, yet muſt they publikely be purſued by the miniſtrie, and cenſured by the Church, and puniſhed by the Magiſtrate. For is it equall

that

that their contemptuouſneſſe ſhould purchaſe fauour to their rebellion, and liberty for them to ſinne freely without controlement? As the example of their licentiouſneſſe and obſtinacie is a precedent of euill to many, ſo let the ſtroke of their puniſhment and diſgrace be a terrour to all.

Verſ. 8. *But rebuke a wiſe man, and he will loue thee.*
9. *Giue admonition to the wiſe, and he will be the wiſer: teach a righteous man, and he will encreaſe in learning.*

NOw he commeth on the contrary ſide to commend the competent hearers of Wiſedome, vpon whom good leſſons are well beſtowed. And they are deſcribed, firſt by their willing receiuing of inſtruction, that they loue them the better that ſhall deale plainely with them. Secondly, by the good vſe they make of it, encreaſing both in knowledge and practiſe of vnderſtanding, and therefore are called wiſe and righteous. For in a ſeaſonable and faithfull reproofe, a man of wiſdome will diſcerne the loue and vpright affection of the reprouer, who wiſheth ſo wel vnto him, as that he will conceale nothing from him, which may tend to his hurt; and therefore detecteth whatſoeuer perill his ſoule is in, and the miſchiefe that is like to befal him touching his eſtate or credit, or ought elſe that is deere vnto him. And conſequently entertaining ſo good an opinion of him that beſtoweth the admonition, hee muſt needs value his counſell accordingly, and make his beſt benefit thereof with conſtant progreſſe in ſound iudgement and goodneſſe.

Verſ. 10. *The beginning of wiſedome is the feare of the Lord, and the knowledge of holy men is vnderſtanding.*

HAuing ſo much commended Wiſedome and ſo earneſtly perſwaded men vnto it, he ſheweth now wherein it doth conſiſt that men might not be deceiued by the counterfeit colour of it, deſcribing it:

Firſt, by the matter, that is, true piety and religion, called

cómonly in the word, the feare of God, becauſe it is an eſſentiall part thereof: and this is not a caſe contingent, as though wiſedome and piety might ſometimes concurre in one perſon and ſometimes bee diſſeuered: but neceſſarie and perpetuall, the one being alwaies the beginning of the other.

Secondly, by the manner, that is, not the knowledge of naturall things that is in Philoſophers: nor the knowledge of ciuill affaires that is in Polititians: nor the hiſtoricall and artificiall knowledge of points of religion that is in hypocrites: but the myſticall knowledge of the myſteries of ſaluation, which the ſpirit of God doth reueale to the hearts of Chriſtians. Where as the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh at large in the Epiſtle to the Corinthians, Chap. 2. 9. 10. 11. *The things which eye hath not ſeene, neither eare hath heard, neither came into mans heart, are, which God hath prepared for them that loue him. But God hath reuealed them vnto vs by his ſpirit.*

Verſ. 11. *For thy daies ſhall be multiplied by me, and the yeers of thy life ſhall be augmented.*

12. *If thou bee wiſe, thou ſhalt bee wiſe for thy ſelfe: and if thou be a ſinner, thou alone ſhalt ſuffer.*

AFter the deſcription of wiſedome, whereby it may bee rightly diſcerned, is here propoſed the profit and reward of it, whereby we are perſwaded to imbrace it: and that is,

Firſt, in a peculiar, namely, long life: which is not ſo to bee vnderſtood as though it were perpetual, and ſo of abſolute neceſſity: for then good men muſt grow to be old men, and all which die young, ſhould die wicked and damned: but that God hath the keeping of their liues in ſuch good ſafety as they ſhall neuer be taken away before due ſeaſon: they ſhall not die ſo ſoone, as that it would bee better for them to liue longer: nor liue ſo long, as that it might be hurtfull they died not ſooner. The point doth *Eliphaz* trulie expound to *Iob*, and all other righteous perſons: Iob 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt goe to thy graue in a full age, as a crop of corne commeth in due ſeaſon into the barne.* Now all graine is not of equall proportion of growth:

growth: ſome is ſowne before others, and yet is cut downe after them: ſome is ſowne after others, and commeth to maturity before them: ſo that good husbands diſpoſe not of their haruest by meaſure of time, but by the ripeneſſe of their corne: and two extremities they prouidently auoide; neither too haſtily to inne the fruites of their fields or trees, for ſo they would wither away: neither to deferre the gathering of them after they bee ripe, for ſo they would drop off, and ſhed, and grow to rottenneſſe. Afterwards he declareth the recompence of wiſdome in generall: that the poſſeſſion and practiſe thereof is not onely a ſeruice to God, nor alone for his ſake ſo often required: but redoundeth alſo to the profit of them that bee owners and performers of it. And to this is oppoſed the contrary ſtate of thoſe peruerſe and wilfull ſcorners, that howſoeuer their deſire and purpoſe is to doe miſchiefe to others, yet all their malice returneth on their owne heads.

Verſ. 13. *A fooliſh woman is alwaies babling, ſhee is ignorant, and knoweth nothing.*

THus much hath been ſpoken of wiſdoms wholſome banquet, which the Lord to that end propoſed, that wee might be allured vnto it. Now followeth the feaſt of Folly, which ſhe maketh to the end, that ſhe may poyſon her gueſts, and God diſcouereth, for this purpoſe that wee might auoid it. And here, as alſo in that which followeth, ſhee is deſcribed by her qualities and behauiour, carrying the right ſtampe and print of an harlot. One thing is, that ſhee is giuen to much talke, to make a noiſe: which was the note of the whoriſh woman, Chap. 7. 11. The meaning here is, that ſinfulneſſe and Satan, by the mouthes of ſinfull perſons, doe pretend many reaſons to iuſtifie any wicked cauſe, and vſe cunning perſwaſions to draw men thereunto; as the vnchaſt woman doth flow with entiſing ſpeeches. And though ſhe haue a lauiſh tongue, yet wee know (according as wee vſe to ſay) that none is ſo bold as blind Bayard. The drift is, that the factors for follie, ſuch as labour to promote ſin, be vtterly deſtitute of ſauing

vnderſtanding, which was called before, the knowledge of holy men.

Verſ. 14. *She ſitteth at the doore of her houſe, on a ſeate in the high places of the City.*

HE continueth ſtill the allegorie, reſembling wickedneſſe to an harlot, whoſe property is to bee abroad in the ſtreets to meet with companions, and to entice men to follie by her lookes and behauiour: which alſo ſinne doth by her ſubtilties to ſeduce mens ſoules. And yet ſhee goeth not as an ordinarie ſtrumpet, or a vagabond, but taketh ſtate vpon her like a courtizan. She ſitteth on a ſeate in the ſtreet, which was wont to be a ſigne of honour. As *Iob* 29.7. *When I went out to the gate, through the City, when I prepared my ſeate in the ſtreet.* And the word ſignifieth a throne or chaire of eſtate, which was for Princes, or principall perſons, and not for men of meane condition: whereby the holy Ghoſt intimateth that ſinne ſeduceth not onely by ſmooth and ſubtill allurements, but by high place, and great countenanc, as hauing many Nobles, and great Potentates to be her agents.

Ciſſac.

Verſ. 15. *To call them that paſſe by the way, that goe right on their way.*

THis is the end and purpoſe of her being in the ſtreets, To doe miſchiefe there: not onely to confirme and harden ſuch as bee already entred into leaud courſes, but to peruert and draw away thoſe that be enclined to any goodneſſe. As Saint *Peter* obſerued: *They ſpeake great ſwelling words of vanity, alluring through the luſts of the fleſh, through much wantonneſſe thoſe that were cleane eſcaped from them that liue in errour, promiſing them liberty, and they themſelues are ſeruants of corruption.* For whiles the diuell holdeth wicked men faſt in their wickedneſſe, hee doth but as it were keepe his owne, which like to tame fowles are alwaies readie at his hand, to doe what he will with, but when hee draweth men of better hopes

1. Pet. 2. 19.

hopes into his net, he ſeemeth to make a prey of Gods game, and to catch that which was erſt flowne from him.

Verſ. 16. *Who ſo is ſimple, let him come hither, and whoſoeuer is voide of vnderſtanding, to him ſhe ſpeaketh.*

WHo ſo is ſimple, &c.] That is, which being ignorant diſcerneth not his blindneſſe, but hath conceite of wiſedome and knowledge.

Let him come hither, &c.] To the companie, counſell, and practiſe of Follie. *And to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding ſhe ſpeaketh, viz.* that haue no knowledge of their owne, nor bee willing to goe to Wiſedomes houſe to get any. Shee knoweth that ſillie men (deuoide of heauenly knowledge although they abound with naturall wit, and fleſhly policie) are eaſily entreated to hearken to her perſwaſions, and to bee allured to her baites: and therefore directeth her ſpeech to them with vndoubted hope of ſucceſſe, both to take, to hold faſt, and to kill them: whereas thoſe which are indued with holy wiſedome will either ſuſpect her inchanting call, and keepe off farre from her, or elſe breake her net, and eſcape away vpon the ſight of their perill, notwithſtanding that ſometimes they be inſnared by her

Verſ. 17. *Stollen waters are ſweet, and hid bread is pleaſant.*

THis verſe containeth an euent that followeth their yeelding to Follies allurements, that at the firſt they find delight and pleaſure, and great contentation in their entertainement.

He alludeth, as it ſeemeth, to the diſorders that are wont to be in harlots houſes, wherein at the meeting of companions they vſe to haue a feaſt, and all the prouiſion is of ſtollen ſtuffe. Either ſeruants filch from their maſters, or otherwiſe they ſteale from their neighbours, hennes, and geeſe, and duckes, and connies, and veniſon, and ſuch things as they can come by: which is called his food, becauſe as they cannot iuſtifie it,

ſo they dare not let it be ſeene, but dreſſe it couertly, and eate it ſecretly in the midſt of the night, in the moſt inward and cloſeſt roome of the whole houſe. And whatſoeuer is ſo gotten, and there made ready is very delicious vnto them, though it were but bread and water.

Verſ. 18. *But hee knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depth of hell.*

HEre followeth another euent enſuing vpon the former; that as they had pleaſure at the firſt, ſo they muſt haue paine at the laſt: as their entertainment was with delight, ſo ſhall their reckoning be with deſtruction. It is ſaid, *he knoweth not*: that is, euery one of them that bee tractable to her call, haue the perill of their ſtate hid from their eyes.

That the dead are there, &c.] That all that giue themſelues to ſuch courſes are ſtrangers from the life of God, and in the power of the firſt death; and *in the depth of hell*, that is, are as certaine to bee damned in the world to come (vnleſſe God giue them repentance) as if they were already in hell fire.

CHAPTER. X.

THE PARABLES OF SALOMON.

Verſ. 1. *A wiſe ſon maketh a glad Father; but a fooliſh ſon is a heauineſſe to his mother.*

PArables.] That is, wiſe & graue ſentences written by *Salomon*, but inſpired by the ſpirit of God, for the information of the mind, and the inſtitution of the life, according to the rules of Wiſedome, Iuſtice, and Piety. The other nine Chapters being prefixed as a preface to theſe, contained a continued diſcourſe, wherein the commendation of Wiſedome, and the exhortations to many good duties were proſecuted with

with variety of arguments: whereas in theſe that follow, for the moſt part, are ſet downe briefe ſayings, euery verſe almoſt comprehending a whole point in it ſelfe, not growing vpon dependance of that which went before, nor miniſtring the occaſion of that which commeth after. Yet ſometimes it falleth out otherwiſe, and diuers verſes together haue dependance one with another, as will appeare in ſome place of this preſent Chapter. *A wiſe ſonne*, that is, a vertuous and towardly ſonne or daughter, *maketh a ioyfull father*, or mother: *and a fooliſh ſonne*, that is, a ſinfull and vngratious child, *is an heauineſſe*, and griefe to his mother or father: yet it is not without cauſe that the mother is rather put in the latter clauſe, then the father: for that ſex is the weaker, and more impatient of ſuch a croſſe: and vſually contemptuous children be bolder to contemne the mother then the father, as Chap. 15. 20. *A fooliſh man deſpiſeth his mother*; as *Rebeccah* was more troubled with *Eſau* then *Iſaac* was: and very often the mothers by too much indulgence and fondneſſe are meanes of their childrens vices; and ſo it is ſaid, *A child ſet at liberty maketh his mother aſhamed*: Chap. 29. 15.

Verſ. 2. *The treaſures of wickedneſſe profit nothing: but righteouſneſſe deliuereth from death.*

THe *treaſures of wickedneſſe.*] That is, the greateſt abundance of wealth which is euill gotten, and euill vſed, or poſſeſſed by an euill owner, *profit nothing*: doe him no good at any time; but leaſt of all at his death, or in time of miſery; for ſo it is intended by the *Antitheſis*, and expreſſed, Chap. 11. 14. *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath, but righteouſneſſe*: that is, vprightneſſe of heart, and holineſſe of behauiour, *deliuereth from death*; that is, from deſtruction, and all other hurtfull dangers. Yet not by any merit of man, but by the mercy of God through Ieſus Chriſt. By which ſaying, the Wiſe man would haue it inferred, that the moſt proſperous ſucceſſe of ſinfull men in their ſinfull waies, although neuer ſo gainefull, doth proue at the laſt to be nothing worth: for their greateſt

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getting (if it were of pretious iewels, as many as would fill a treasurie) is insufficient to ward off, and to fence them from the violence of misery when it shall assault them, or to confirme their hearts so as they may bee able to sustaine the force therof, and that contrarily well doing, grace, and a good conscience (howsoeuer they seeme for a time to bee a needlesse, disgracefull, and troublesome burthen) yet a season will come, the vse of them will be seene and enioyed, when no weapon or armes, no sword, shield, helmet, brestplate, or the most compleat armour of proofe, shall so much bestead a souldier in the heate of the battell, as these will helpe the heart of a Christian with comfort, and his soule with safety, when hee is beset about with perils, or must depart with his natural life.

Vers. 3. *The Lord will not famish the soule of the righteous: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.*

THese words be inferred vpon the former, as an answere to a secret obiection that might bee made against them: Why should it bee thought that men get no good by gathering riches in what manner soeuer? They stand them in stead in time of dearth and scarcity; when others that want them, though neuer so iust, are like to perish. Now here he sheweth the case to be otherwise. Good men are not vnprouided of foode because they are vnfurnished with wealth: and sinfull men haue no assurance of prouision though they haue riches: *for the Lord will not famish the soules of the righteous*, that is, will not suffer the men themselues to starue, though they haue neuer so little: *But will cast away the substance of the wicked*, that is, he will depriue them of the possession, or vse, or vertue of it when they are in greatest need.

Verse 4. *A deceitfull hand maketh poore: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

THis verse also containeth an answere to an other obiection, which might rise out of the words immediately going

ing before. If food and maintenance be the gift of God, and they that haue little ſhall be kept from want, & they that haue great ſtore ſhall be ſtript of all; to what end ſhould men trauaile and take paines? the wiſeſt way is to giue ouer all labour. Now this he refuteth by ſhewing the meanes whereby righteous men vſe to receiue this foode and prouiſion from Gods hand, and that is by ſedulitie and diligence in their vocations. And therefore he demonſtrateth the contrarie effects of contrarie men; namely, of ſlothfull perſons, and ſuch as be induſtrious and painfull. Slothfull perſons fall into two euils: the one is the practiſe of deceitfulnes, called here a deceitfull hand: the other is the burthen of pouerty, which is a puniſhment inflicted vpon them both for fraud and idleneſſe. They that bee diligent haue their reward yeelded vnto them, that they thriue and proſper by the labour of their hands: & though their wealth bee not ſo great in quantitie, yet the ſmalneſſe thereof is recompenſed in quality and good vſe of it; and therefore is called, *pretious riches*, Chap. 12. 27. And ſo they haue neither need nor diſpoſition to giue themſelues to deceitfull ſhifts, as ſluggards.

Verſe 5. *Hee that gathereth in ſummer is a ſonne of vnderſtanding: and he that ſleepeth in harueſt is a ſonne of confuſion.*

THe drift of theſe words is to teach men to redeeme the time, and make the beſt aduantage of the ſeaſons, comparing opportunitie to ſummer or harueſt, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and readie to be gathered; and the perſons to whom it is offered, to husbandmen that haue commodities growing in the fields. And therefore as we iudge him prudent which ſo ſtirreth himſelfe, and haſteneth his people to cut downe his corne, and to inne it when it is ripe, and the weather is ſeaſonable: ſo God here calleth him a ſonne of vnderſtanding, that is, a wiſe man, which taketh time while time ſerueth, for any good purpoſe and occaſion. And as the world crieth, fie on him that ſleepeth in harueſt, that is, doth no more labour or looke to his affaires, then if he were in a dead ſleep,

and

and ſo ſuſtaineth the loſſe of all his crop, by meanes whereof he ouerthroweth the ſtate of all his familie: ſo the Lord tearmeth him a ſonne of confuſion, or which bringeth confuſion, that is to ſay, miſerie and ſhame vpon himſelfe and his friends, which ſtriueth not to take his part of Gods bleſſing in due ſeaſon.

Verſ. 6. *Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous: but iniquitie ſhall couer the mouth of the wicked.*

BLeſſings] That is, all kinde of happineſſe, euery good gift of God that is fit for them, as peace, plentie, grace, and health, &c. All ſhall be vpon the head of the righteous: meaning vpon the whole ſoule and body of euery faithfull holie man. And they are ſaid to be on the head, becauſe they come downe from aboue, and light as it were vpon the head, and ſo deſcend to the other parts. But iniquitie, the vengeance of God executed for violence and ſinne, ſhall couer the mouth of the wicked, ſhall take away all excuſes and defences from him. Now here is ſomewhat vnderſtood in the former clauſe, and expreſſed in the latter: and ſomewhat vnderſtood in the latter, and ſupplied in the former. Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous, and therefore doe open his mouth, *viz.* to praiſe God, and maintaine his owne innocencie: and iudgements (called here violence or iniquity, by a *metonymie* of the cauſe) are vpon the head of the wicked, and ſo cloſe vp their mouth.

Verſe 7. *The memoriall of the iuſt ſhall be bleſſed: but the name of the wicked ſhall rot.*

THis is one particular of the bleſſings mentioned in the former verſe, that that which is neereſt to a man, as his name, ſhall be in eſtimation, and good account. The remembrance and mention of him being abſent aliue, and when he is dead, ſhall be acceptable, and with his praiſe and commendation: But the name of the wicked is curſed, and therefore had in

in hatred and deteſtation, euen as much loathed as the ſtinke of his careaſe, that lieth rotting in the graue. All the contumelies wherewith the godly are purſued, take no effect againſt them, to worke their perpetuall diſhonour: and albeit for a time, through ſlanders, columniations, and ſcoffes, they are among the ſonnes of Belial, baſe and vile perſons, much vilified and contemned; yet no reports, or imputations, no ieſts or deriſion can make them contemptible: hee that decked them with the light of grace, maugre the malice of the diuell, and all their aduerſaries, will alſo adorne them with the brightnes of glorie, what practiſes ſoeuer there be to keepe them in obſcuritie and reproch. Who of all Gods people which *commit their waies vnto the Lord*, according to his precept, haue not at the firſt, or at the laſt, either ſooner, or later, their *righteouſneſſe brought foorth as the light, and their iudgement, as the noone day*, according to his promiſe? And in like manner, all the applauſes which are giuen to vnworthie men, the great boaſts that are made of them, well neere vniuerſally by the mouthes of all, euery man magnifying them with praiſes, as ſometime they did the falſe Prophets, and Phariſies; yet he will ſo detect their vicious behauiour, and make them appeare ſo odious, as that either in the preſent, or future ages, they ſhall be a prouerbe of obloquie: or if it fall not out ſooner, their ſhame will be immeaſurable at the day of the Lord, and ſo ſhall be honor of the righteous. Pſal. 37. 6.

Verſe 8. *The wiſe in heart will receiue commandements: but the fooliſh in talke ſhall be beaten.*

THE *wiſe in heart*, &c.] That is, ſuch as haue ſauing knowledge, and conſcience, *will receiue commandements*, will heare and obey the word of God without replies and cauils againſt it: *but the fooliſh in talke*, he that abuſeth his lippes to murmuring and friuolous obiections, *ſhall be beaten*, that is, ſhall be plagued for his contempt.

The ſenſe will be plaine, if the ſupply be made in both clauſes

ſes of the oppoſition, in this manner: the wiſe in heart will readily receiue commandements, and therefore ſhall be rewarded: but the fooliſh in heart will be fooliſh in talke to reiect commandements, therefore hee ſhall be puniſhed. The obedient may expect ſuch intreatie as diligent and faithfull ſeruants receiue from the hands of kinde and good maſters; and ſuch as ſhift off all ſeruices with obiections, replies, and gainſayings, ſhal be vſed like to contumacious and ſtubborne bondſlaues.

Verſe 9. *Hee that walketh vprightly, walketh boldly: but hee that peruerteth his waies ſhall be knowne.*

HE *that walketh vprightly,*] That is, doth carefully looke to his waies with an honeſt heart: *walketh ſurely*, hauing both the affection, and ground, and effects of Chriſtian boldneſſe: *but he that peruerteth his waies*: that is, doth allow himſelfe in any courſe, though neuer ſo ſecretly: *ſhall be knowne*; his ſins ſhall be detected.

The ſenſe of the whole verſe may bee thus expreſſed: *Hee that walketh vprightly, walketh ſurely*; becauſe his faithfulnes ſhall be knowne to his praiſe: *And he that peruerteth his waies, walketh dangerouſly*; becauſe his leaudnes ſhall be knowne to his ſhame. Let vs (ſaith Eccleſiaſtes) *feare God and keepe his commandements: for this is the whole man. For God will bring euery worke vnto iudgement: with euery ſecret thing, whether it be good or euill. The Lord when he commeth* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *will lighten things that are hid in darkneſſe, and make the counſels of the heart manifeſt: and then ſhall euery man haue praiſe of God.* Both theſe holy writers are ſo to be vnderſtood, that all the goodnes of the good ſhall be reueiled vnto their praiſe, and none of their corruptions: and all the vices of the wicked diſcouered to their confuſion, and none of their good workes for approbation.

Eccle. 12. 13. 14

1. Cor. 4. 5.

Verſe

Verſ.10. *He that winketh with the eye worketh ſorrow: and he that is fooliſh in talke, ſhall be beaten.*

THis confirmeth the latter clauſe of the former verſe, That they that peruert their waies ſhall bee knowne, though they doe it neuer ſo ſecretly, which is meant by the winking of the eye. Yet by this it ſhall appeare that it is knowne, becauſe it ſhall be puniſhed. For as they practiſe miſchiefe againſt others, and many times worke them ſorrow: ſo they certainly bring miſchiefe on their owne heads, and procure ſorrow to their owne ſoules. And yet all winking is not condemned: but that which tendeth to hurt, when men winke wiles. The Apoſtle beckned or winked at *Iohn* that he ſhould aske who it was that ſhould betray Chriſt, and yet this was well done of him; for he ſhewed a reuerend regard of Chriſt, that he would not be loud and audacious in his preſence. If they peruert their waies openly by being fooliſh in ſpeech, open iudgement ſhall be executed vpon them for their open ſinnes, and thereby their mouthes ſhall be ſtopped. Ioh.13.24.

Verſe 11. *The mouth of a righteous man is a welſpring of life: but iniquitie couereth the mouth of the wicked.*

IN Iſrael, and in the countries bordering vpon it, it was a great benefit to haue wels of water, both for the vſe of men and of the cattell, and therfore things of great account be many times compared to them in the Scriptures, and heere the mouth of a righteous man is ſo called in a double reſpect, both for the conſtancie of good conference (according to the ſimilitude, for ſuch ſprings as were continuall, and would hold out as well in ſommer as in winter, were ſaid to be wels of liuing water: Gen.26.19. as alſo, and eſpecially for the good effect, that they bee inſtruments ſometimes to beget, and vſually to confirme and refreſh the life of the ſoule. The latter part of the verſe hath been expounded in the ſixth verſe.

The expoſition ſtandeth thus: The mouth of a righteous man

man doth alwaies flow with wholesome words; and therfore shall bee continued open with blessings: But the mouth of a wicked man doth alwaies flow with hurtfull words: and therefore shall be stopped with violence.

Verse 12. *Hatred stirreth vp contentions: but loue couereth all trespasses.*

HAtred: and all vncharitable affections, as enuie and wrath, *stirreth vp strife:* worketh all kinde of reuenge and mischiefe, as backbiting, vpbraiding with former faults, and very often procureth iniust criminations. *But loue coue-reth all trespasses:* by forgiuing them and reprouing them in friendly manner, and by concealing them from all those, to whom the knowledge of them hath not come, or doth not appertaine. The opposition is thus framed; Hatred stirreth vp contentions, and blazeth abroad mens infirmities; but loue seeketh peace, and couereth all trespasses.

Verse 13. *In the lips of him that hath vnderstanding, wisedome is found: but a rod shall be for the backe of him that is destitute of vnderstanding.*

THese words neede no further explanation, then the supply of that which is to be vnderstood in both the clauses. For this seemeth to be the sense of them: In the lips or speech of him that hath vnderstanding wisedome is found, which keepeth iudgements and punishments from him: but in the lips of him that wanteth vnderstanding follie is found; which bringeth iudgements and punishment vpon him. The first hemistich, or former part of the verse, is the same simply set downe, and without allegorie or metaphore, as was comparatiuely vttered in the eleuenth verse, by the similitude of a wel-spring.

The latter part is the same in sense that was in the eighth and tenth verses: for there it is said; that *the foolish in talke shall be beaten.*

Verse

Verſ. 14. *Wiſe men lay vp knowledge: but the mouth of the foole is a preſent deſtruction.*

HEre is declared by what meanes wiſe men attaine to that abilitie and ſufficiencie of fruitfull ſpeeches, by due attention to that which is ſpoken to them or which they reade: or by diligent obſeruation of things which they behold. Thoſe they lay vp, as a man would his treaſure, in a ſafe place. As therefore a prouident thriftie husband, which hath gathered together a ſtocke, will bee ready vpon ſhort warning to make a purchaſe, or vpon any good occaſion to disburſe a ſum of money: ſo hee that is faithfull in ſeeking knowledge, and applieth both heart and memorie to hold it faſt, and keepe it, ſhall readily in conuenient time draw out the good things which he hath learned, either for his owne vſe, or the benefit and profit of others. Which is contrary in careleſſe and heedleſſe perſons: for they will be as forward to ſpeake as any others: but that which is within the heart, will quickly bee at hand to come out at the lips, and that is poyſon, and venome, and peſtilent matter, which will certainly hurt themſelues, and be dangerous to other. So then thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: wiſe men lay vp knowledge, and therfore their mouthes are a preſent preſeruation: but fooliſh men reiect knowledge; and therefore their mouthes are a preſent deſtruction.

Verſ. 15. *The rich mans goods are his ſtrong citie: and the feare of the needie is their pouerty.*

THe rich mans goods are his ſtrong city, &c.] That is, wealthie worldlings doe truſt to their poſſeſſions when they haue great ſtore. For hee ſpeaketh not of any ſafety that they haue by their goods; but which they ſeeme to themſelues to haue; as is plainely expreſſed, Chap. 18. 11. They are as an high wall in his imagination: and it is ſometimes the fault of good men in their infirmities, to repoſe too much confidence in outward things, when they abound with them; as euen *Da-*

said himselfe acknowledged of himselfe; *In my prosperity I said, I shall neuer be moued:* Psal. 30.6. On the other side, the want of earthly substance doth fill the hearts of vnregenerate poore men with feares of famine and misery. And Gods owne people are not alwaies free from the assaults thereof, by reason of the imperfection of their faith.

Vers. 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: but the reuenewes of the wicked is sinne.*

THE *labour of the righteous tendeth to life*, &c.] That is, the goods that good men vsually get by trauell (though many times they are descended to them by inheritance, or bestowed vpon them by gift, or by some other lawfull meanes brought to their hands) *tendeth to life, viz.* both of soule and body in this world, and for the world to come: whereas the riches of vngodly men are alwaies abused by them, and made the occasions and meanes of vnrighteousnesse. The opposition is this: the riches of the righteous doe tend to goodnesse, and so to their life: but the wealth of the wicked doth tend to sinne, and so to their death. For euery mans substance is a meanes of his benificence and well doing, or an occasion vnto him of sinning: either it inducеth him to shew mercy, and to doe good, which the Lord will recompence with life and blessednesse: or else he is thereby incited to pride, cruelty, voluptuousnesse, riot, prodigality, or nigardize, or other like exorbitant courses, whereby he maketh himselfe liable to Gods curses, and his owne perdition.

Vers. 17. *He that regardeth instruction is in the way of life: but he that refuseth correction goeth out of the way.*

HE *that regardeth instruction.*] That is, which yeeldeth reuerence, attention, and obedience to the ministry of Gods holy word; *is in the way of life*, hee taketh the right course to obtaine euerlasting saluation: *but hee that refuseth correction*, which will not endure to heare his sinnes rebuked;

goeth

goeth out of the way, both depriueth himſelfe of eternall life, and walketh towards deſtruction. All ſorts of men are paſſengers, traueiling as it were in a iourney vnto their place: if they follow the direction of Gods meſſengers, whom hee hath appointed for guides, they ſhall find the law of God a direct path to leade them vnto preſent and future happineſſe, and that euerlaſting: but if they ſcorne to be ſhewed where, and how far they haue wandred awry, and will not bee conducted vnto the right way of repentance & reformation, they cannot but ſtraggle vp and downe in the by-paths of iniquitie, vntill they deſperately periſh.

Verſ. 18. *He that hideth hatred, is a man of deceitfull lips; and he that vttereth ſlander is a foole.*

HAuing in the former words declared the perill of them that refuſe admonition, hee deſcribeth here the perſons that vſe to doe it, and they are of two ſorts: ſome are hypocrites, that pretend and make a ſhew of fauour and good liking, and yet nouriſh deadly hatred in their hearts: others are profeſſed contemners of that which is taught: but yet picking a quarrell againſt the man that deliuereth it, as though the fault were wholly in him, and iuſt occaſion were giuen to reiect all that he teacheth. But the Lord, which knoweth the ground and roote of their calumniations and cauils, imputeth them to their proper cauſe: and that is, the ſinfulneſſe and follie of thoſe malicious deſpiſers.

Verſ. 19. *The ſin ceaſeth not by the multitude of words: but he that refraineth his lips is wiſe.*

HE ſeemeth ſtill to proceed in the proſecution of the matter ſpoken of in the ſeuenteenth verſe, that men take an euill way for themſelues, which refuſe to bee reproued. The words immediately going before theſe, declare how ſome reiect it, by inward hatred and bitterneſſe of heart, and yet outwardly make ſemblance of great loue and friendſhip: others

breake out into open profeſſion of their diſcontentment and malice, by reproching thoſe that would helpe them out of their ſins: and here commeth a third ſort, which would ſhift off all rebukes, by denying, defending, cloking, or colouring their faults by excuſing, & extenuating matters that are charged vpon them. But all is in vaine; the ſin will not be blowne away with breath: and therefore he ſheweth that it is a point of wiſedome to giue place by ſilence, and to take the blame vpon them.

Verſ. 20. *The tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer: but the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

HE ſetteth forth the excellencie of the ſpeech of godly men by compariſon; reſembling it to ſiluer that is purged and fined from the droſſe that was in it: becauſe a good man will be carefull of his tongue, not onely that there be no mixture or filthineſſe and leaudneſſe in his words; but alſo to auoide all ſuperfluous and idle babling, and ſo to open his mouth with holy wiſedome. Which is contrary in the wicked; becauſe there is a contrary fountaine in him of ſinfulnes. and corruption, and no matter of vertue and grace, which are the ſprings of all wholeſome ſpeeches. Thus therefore ſtandeth the *Antitheſis:* the tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer; becauſe his heart is pretious: but the tongue of the wicked is as droſſe; becauſe his heart is nothing worth.

Verſ. 21. *The lips of the righteous doe feed many: but fools die for want of wiſedome,*

BEfore was declared the excellencie of a good tongue, and well ſeaſoned ſpeech: and heere are the effects of it commended, namely, the good that is wrought by it, the ſoules of many being edified therewith, and receiuing grace, and groweth for ſaluation & comfort, as the body doth obtain ſtrength, and nouriture, and refreſhing, by their meanes that miniſter wholeſome foode vnto it. And this is illuſtrated by the contrary

contrary effect of wicked and ignorant perſons, that they are ſo farre from feeding others with knowledge and wiſedome, that they ſuffer themſelues to be ſtarued to death and deſtruction, through the want of it.

Verſ. 22. *The bleſſing of the Lord it doth make rich: and he addeth no ſorrowes with it.*

THe purpoſe and drift of theſe words is, to ſhew the preeminence that Gods people haue aboue the men of the world: that whereas the wicked haue nothing but their owne hands, and carnall meanes to truſt vnto for their eſtate, ſuch as be godly, haue God to prouide for them; and his goodneſſe onely doth make rich, and they only are enriched by him. But becauſe his enemies haue vſually more ſtore of goods then his children; and thereby it may ſeeme, that either men may bee rich without his bleſſing, or elſe that he is more prouident for ſinners then for Saints; therefore he ſheweth the difference; That troubles and vexations are intermingled with the goods of the wicked, and his ſeruants are freed from them. Yet it is not ſo to be conceiued, as though no good men had any troubles with their riches; and that whoſoeuer do find griefe and perturbations in theſe earthly things, were depriued of the bleſſing of God, and teſtimonies of his fauour: but this is the meaning, that ſo farre as hee doth beſtow them, and they depend vpon him for them, ſo farre they eſcape from vexations: ſo that the cares and troubles grow meerely from their owne infirmities.

Verſ. 23. *It is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickednes: but wiſedome* is the delight *of a man of vnderſtanding.*

IT *is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickedneſſe, &c.*] That is, ſinfull men take great pleaſure in doing that which is euill, as if it were a ſport or recreation to them: and it is as much ioy and refreſhing to him that is godly wiſe, both to get wiſdome, and to performe all the good exerciſes thereof. That

which the one of them vehemently delighteth in, and hath in admiration, the other abhorreth, and hath in deteſtation; and ſo contrary, according vnto their contrary hearts, contrarie affections, contrary conuerſation, contrary eſtate and condition; theſe being as filthie beaſts that feed on the draugh, or carrion of the fleſh, and theſe as holy men which liue by the wholeſome food of the ſpirit.

Verſ. 24. *That which the wicked feareth ſhall come vpon him: but God will grant the deſire of the righteous.*

THe condemnation in the world to come, which vngodly men through the guiltineſſe of their conſciences are often ſummoned vnto, when God ſhall draw their ſoule out of their body, they ſhall certainly fal into. And thoſe iudgments, and miſeries of this life, which they moſt hate, though they hope to eſcape them, they are in danger to bring vpon themſelues.

And that which is moſt deſireable, and will bee moſt comfortable to Chriſtians, the Lord which knoweth what is moſt acceptable to them, and profitable for them, wil in due ſeaſon beſtow vpon them. For the beſt men (out of their corruptions which are not wholly aboliſhed, though much diminiſhed nor fully ſubdued, though they haue loſt their ſoueraignty) do ſomtimes caſt their affections vpon thoſe things which are not expedient, and thoſe in great fauour hee detaineth from them. *Moſes* and *Ieremie* deſired greatly to bee exempted from the burthen of miniſtery, and to leade a priuate life; but God neither reſpected their happineſſe ſo little, nor the benefit of his people, nor his owne ſeruice to bee performed by them, as to yeeld to their deſires.

Verſ. 25. *As the whirle-wind paſſeth, ſo is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an euerlaſting foundation.*

THe meaning of the word is, that vngodly men, howſoeuer they flouriſh for a time, yet doe ſuddenly come to ruine,

ine and deſtruction; as the whirle-wind ſwiftly bloweth ouer, and is leſſe conſtant, and permanent, then the ordinary winde is, though there be no ſtability in any. But when it is ſaid, *they are no more*, hee doth not intimate any mortality of their ſoules, as though they ſhould bee wholly diſſolued as brute beaſts: for their ſoules are euerlaſting as well as Gods people, and their bodies ſhall bee raiſed vp againe at the day of the Lord, as well as the Saints: but it is their hope and happineſſe, and not their being that periſheth, they ſhall neuer recouer any good eſtate any more. Now againſt theſe are ſet the righteous, whoſe ſoule and body, and bleſſednesſe, haue a ſetled ſafety, as a foundation that can neuer be remoued. So that this is the oppoſition: the wicked are as a whirle-wind, and ſo are no more: but the righteous are like a firme foundation, and ſo perpetually remaine.

Verſ. 26. *As vineger is to the teeth, and ſmoake to the eye; ſo is the ſlothfull to them that ſend him.*

AS *vineger*, &c.] That is, too much vineger, or other things that be ſharpe & ſowre, do ſet the teeth on edge; and ſmoake doth bring both ſmart and hurt to the eyes: ſo doth the ſlothful perſon, or he that is giuen to any other leaud behauiour, worke vexation of heart to them that ſend him, or commit matter of moment vnto him. For it is as naturall to them to be careleſſe of their buſineſſe, and vntruſtie to ſuch as imploy them, as it is for vineger to retaine ſowreneſſe, and for ſmoake to pierce the eyes: and by this meanes God pleaſeth to plague ſome, and to chaſten others, & to admoniſh others. Diuers take more pleaſure in ſinfull ſluggards, then in godly faithfull ſeruants, vnto them it is a due recompence to find and feele them falſe and pernicious: many are too too heedleſſe in their choyce, and not afraid to giue entertainment to the worſer ſort, and therefore many times they are ſcourged by them: and ſundrie doe learne experience by ſuch a ſucceſſe, to be more warie afterwards, and therefore obſerue the wicked to auoid them, and haue alwaies ſuch as feare God in greater eſtimation.

Verſ. 27.

Verſ. 27. *The feare of the Lord encreaſeth the daies: but the yeeres of the wicked are cut ſhort.*

THe *feare of the Lord* &c.] That is, true piety and religion, with the exerciſe alſo of iuſtice and righteouſnes, *Increaſeth the daies*; That is, as a meanes it preſerueth thoſe that are endued with it, from an vntimely death. *But the yeeres of the wicked ſhall be cut off.* Their vngodly and ſinfull courſe of life is ſometimes an inſtrument to bring them ſpeedily to their end; as by ſurfets and euill diſeaſes, or falling into the hands of the Magiſtrate, or by quarrelling, and ſuch like: Somtimes it prouoketh the Lord to ſtay them in the middeſt of their race, & not to ſuffer them to come to that age, which by their ſtrength and conſtitution of body they might haue attained vnto. And in this ſenſe the Prophet ſaith in the Pſalmes; that *the wicked ſhall not liue out halfe their daies.* Pſal. 55. 23.

Verſ. 28. *The patient abiding of the righteous ſhall be gladneſſe: but the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh.*

AFter that the children of God haue once imbraced his promiſes, afflictions & tentations do vſually enſue thereupon, that it would ſeeme to ſenſe and fleſhly reaſon, that miſerie and troubles were the only rewards of piety and obedience, & nothing elſe performed to them that truſt in his word. Now therefore hee ſheweth that a better ſtate and condition remaineth for them: that their ſorrow ſhal be turned into ioy, and their mourning into gladneſſe, when the Lord ſhall deliuer them from troubles, and fulfill all his promiſes. Which is illuſtrated & further amplified by the contrary caſe of the wicked: which howſoeuer now they ſeeme to haue the prehemineuce, & are moſt likely to preuaile hereafter, ſhall yet bee depriued of their preſent proſperity, & fruſtrated of all future expectation. This then is the oppoſition: The hope of the righteous ſhall preuaile, and bring them gladneſſe: but the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh, and ſo worke them ſorrow.

Verſ. 29.

Verſ. 29. *The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright man: but feare ſhall be to the workers of iniquitie.*

BY the way of the Lord, is meant the whole adminiſtratiō, both of his word, wherby he maketh his will known, and of his ſpirit whereby hee giueth grace, and of his prouidence, whereby he protecteth his ſeruants, and performeth all good things vnto them. By euery one of theſe meanes, doth he eſtabliſh and confirme both the hearts & ſtates of ſuch as be faithfull. But as for the wicked, howſoeuer he ſuffer them for a time to proceed in their vngodly waies without any great croſſes, yet at laſt he executeth ſuch iudgements vpon thē, as the very ſight therof cauſeth them to quake & tremble. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition; The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright for preſeruatiō, & therfore it worketh boldnes; but it weakeneth the wicked for deſtruction, and therfore it bringeth feare.

Verſ. 30. *The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued: but the wicked ſhall not dwell in the earth.*

THe righteous ſhall neuer be remoued.] They ſhall neuer be remoued from Gods fauour; they ſhall neuer be remoued from the conſtant graces of the ſpirit in their ſoules; or hurtfully, in the way of a curſe, from an outward good eſtate; nor vnſeaſonably be cut off from the earth. Now becauſe ſome of theſe iudgements do ſeeme ſomtimes to fall vpon ſome righteous perſons, who for a ſeaſon be eclipſed of grace, & ſeparated frō the fruition & comfortable ſight of Gods kindnes, and fauour towards them; and their eſtate in appearance is wholly ruinated and ouerthrowne: therefore the word doth well beare it, agreeable to the meaning of the holy Ghoſt, to ſay; that *the righteous ſhall not be remoued for euer.* Though they ſeeme to bee caſt downe for a time, yet they ſhall bee reſtored againe afterwards. The contrary is here affirmed concerning the caſe of the wicked, who ſhall certainely fall vnleſſe they repent: they ſhall not continue in that eſtate wherein

wherein they are moſt grounded, and haue greateſt eſtabliſhment: they are ſo farre from enioying eternall life in heauen, as that the vengeance of God will not permit them long to keepe their owne breath, or to hold the outward poſſeſſions of the earth. The oppoſition therefore in effect is this; *The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued*, but haue an habitation for euer in heauen; but the wicked ſhall be remoued, and not ſuffered ſo much as to dwell in the earth.

Verſ. 31. *The mouth of the righteous will be fruitfull in wiſedome: but the tongue of the vnrighteous ſhall be cut out.*

THis verſe agreeth altogether in ſubſtance of matter with the eleuenth; only the compariſon is altered: for there the tongue of a good man for the conſtant ſtore of holy ſpeeches, was reſembled to a plentifull fountaine; and here, to a fruitfull tree, or fertile field: and there the wicked for leaud ſpeeches, was threatned to haue his mouth ſtopped; and here to haue his tongue cut out: that is, the iudgements of God vpon him for his vngratious and curſed ſpeakings, ſhall ſtrike him as mute and dumbe, as if the tongue were cut out of his head.

Verſ. 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh froward things.*

THe meaning of theſe words is, that a righteous man knoweth and regardeth what is beſt pleaſing to God for him to ſpeake, & what is moſt grateſull to good men to heare: and what doth deſerue acceptatiõ at any mans hand for faithfulneſſe and truth; and therefore he will vſe his lips to vtter it: but the wicked neither knoweth nor regardeth theſe things; and therefore he vomiteth out only peruerſe ſpeeches, ſuch as tend to rebellion againſt God, the damnifying of men, and the annoyance and hurt of his owne ſelfe.

Chap.

CHAPTER. XI.

Verse 1. *False balances are an abomination to the Lord: but a perfect weight pleaseth him.*

VNder false balances are comprehended all vniust weights, lines and measures. And therewithall is condemned whatsoeuer kinde of guile, and deceit may be found either in the buyer, or seller. As when that which is sold is defectiue either in quantitie, or qualitie, not being fit for the vse that it is bought for, or not correspondent to the price that is paid for it, or not answerable to the testimonie that is giuen of it. And with these doth *Amos* charge the wicked wealthie men of his age: *They make the Epha* or measure *small, and the shekell*, or price *great, and falsifie the weights of deceit. That they may buy the poore for siluer, and the needie for shooes, and sell the refuse of their wheate.* So on the other side in the buyer, when he shall faile of all meete proportion betweene the price that he paieth, and the commoditie that he buyeth, giuing farre lesse then the worth and value of it. And where it is said, *They are abomination to the Lord*, it is not meant that his quarrell is against the insensible creatures, but he is displeased with the iniquitie of the persons, which make, vse, keepe, or allow them. Whereby the other clause may bee better vnderstood, that the Lord is pleased with such as doe vprightly vse them, and with loue of equitie, exercise it in their traffique, and couenants.

Verse 2. *When pride commeth, then commeth contempt, but with the lowly is wisedome.*

WHen *pride commeth*, that is, when it groweth to maturitie, hauing power to puffe vp mens hearts, and shewing it selfe in words, or workes, in countenance, apparell,

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or geſtures, *then commeth contempt*, that is, ſhame then approcheth, and is neere at hand, marching in the next ranke after this loftie heart, and inſolent behauiour. As is to bee ſeene in many who hauing been firſt lifted vp in their owne haughtie mindes, were afterwards caſt down by Gods righteous iudgements, either into phrenſies, or groſſe ſinnes, or ruine of ſtate, or obloquie for their former hidden faults now publiſhed at laſt to their great diſgrace. The other part of the antitheſis, containing the honour that doth accompanie humilitie, is argued by conſequent, in this manner: when pride commeth, then commeth folly, which euer bringeth ſhame: but when humilitie commeth, then commeth wiſedome, which is neuer without glorie.

Verſe 3. *The vprightnes of the iuſt ſhall guide them: but the frowardnes of the tranſgreſſours ſhall deſtroy them.*

BY *vprightneſſe* is not meant an extrauagant well meaning without further rule or warrant, as though good intents were competent guides of our waies to ſaluation: but the ſinceritie of an heart faithfully, though not perfectly, willing to beleeue & obey that which it knoweth, and reſolutely though not abſolutely, deſirous to know that which God ſhall reueile vnto it. Now this is ſaid *to guide righteous men*, that is, ſhall procure good direction frō the Lord, both for his ſeruice, and their owne happineſſe, and make them tractable to follow the ſame. Contrary to this is the condition of the wicked, who are not led with vprightnes, but carried with peruerſenes, & therefore miſled by the ſame to their vndoing. For thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: the vprightnes of the iuſt ſhall guide them in the way, and ſo preſerue them: but the frowardnes of the wicked will keepe them from the way, and ſo deſtroy them.

Verſe 4. *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath: but righteouſnes deliuereth from death.*

THeſe words ſeeme to containe an anticipation, or preuenting of an obiection, which might bee moued againſt the

the latter point of the former verſe. What ſpeake you of deſtruction to come vpon wicked men? I truſt you will not extend it to all: for many of them are ſubſtantiall wealthy men, of great ſtate and abilitie. Who can deſtroy them? What ſhal their power, and riches doe the while? To this it is here anſwered, that riches auaile not in the day of wrath: their wealth can neither withſtand the ſtrokes of God, nor leſſen them, nor make them any whit the more able to beare them, when his anger doth execute iudgements, and when his iudgements declare his anger. But righteouſnes is that which deliuereth from death, and all other miſeries, that the ſting thereof ſhall neuer make any man miſerable.

Verſe 5. *The righteouſnes of the vpright ſhall direct his way, or make his way ſtraight, or euen: but the wicked ſhall fall in his owne wickednes.*

HEre hee addeth to that which he had begun in the third verſe, and ſheweth that ſinceritie and righteouſnes doe not onely leade men to a good way, and tell them what is their dutie, and fit to be performed, but maketh the way paſſable for them, and them conſtant and proſperous in it. The which againe is oppoſed the way of the wicked, euen their owne ſinfull courſe of life, being crooked and cragged, and rough and rugged, and full of manifold perils, wherein at laſt they fall and periſh. In appearance the path of grace & goodnes is ſo full of troubles and difficulties, as that it ſhould bee impoſſible for any man to goe along in it, and not be ſtopped, or turned aſide before he come to his liues end, and yet a good conſcience findeth eaſe therein: and the broad way of ſinne wherein the world walketh, ſeemeth very plaine and pleaſant, as alſo voide of all annoiances, or dangers, but euery one that trauelleth in it meeteth with many externall croſſes, ſuch as they neuer doubted of; or internall terrors and vexations, ſuch as they neuer dreaded, and at laſt proceeding on impenitently, they ſtumble at, and are ouerthrowne by one iudge-

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ment or other: or death, in the end, as an vnauoidable quick-ſand, doth ſwallow them vp, and deſtroy them for euer.

Verſe 6. *The righteouſneſſe of the vpright deliuereth them: but the tranſgreſſors ſhall be taken in their owne wickednes.*

THis verſe, as it may appeare, is annexed to the former for confirmation of the point therein contained, that righteouſnes doth direct the way of vpright men, both to holy conuerſation, and happie ſtate. Againſt the which a doubt may riſe from the ſhew of the contrary, becauſe that good men are ſometimes plunged in great calamities, and ſomtimes in great tranſgreſſions: and therefore their way ſeemeth as indirect, as if they were wicked, and their righteouſnes to doe them as little good as if they had none at all. Now this ſcruple hee remoueth by ſhewing what benefit it bringeth, that then eſpecially they haue the vſe of it, when they fall into ſuch diſtreſſes. For then the fruite thereof is moſt for their comfort when it ſhall deliuer them out of dangers, out of troubles, out of feares, out of temptations, out of ſinnes, and from deſtruction. Yet not by ſtrength of it owne, but by the power of God: not according to their worthineſſe in way of deſert, but according to his goodneſſe in way of reward: not extended to all men that doe good workes, but reſtrained to vpright men whoſe works are good. And for the cleerer illuſtration of their bleſſed eſtate he bringeth in for contrary, the miſerable condition of the wicked, oppoſing tranſgreſſors to vpright perſons; their miſchiefe to the others iuſtice: their perill to the others protection: the one part incloſed in the net of troubles is yet aſſured of ſafe eſcape by means of their graces, the other abroad at the baite of proſperitie ſhall certainly fall into ſnares by meanes of their wickedneſſe.

Verſ. 7. *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation periſheth, and the hope of his power ſhall periſh.*

THe meaning is, that euery ſinfull mans affection of hoping, and happineſſe hoped for, and ſtrongeſt meanes to attaine

attaine to his hope, ſhall end with his life, and die at his death, and vaniſh away at the time of his deſtruction. Riches and greatneſſe cauſe him to truſt much to himſelfe, and his owne ſufficiencie for the accompliſhment of great exploites, and the perpetuitie, with increaſe of proſperitie and happineſſe; but the end of his life will be the period of all his abundance and excellencie. For the rich man (as it is in the Pſalme) *ſhall not take away any thing with him when he dieth, his glorie ſhall not goe downe after him.* No might (were he the moſt puiſſant potentate vnder heauen) can reſcue him out of the hand of the graue, or erect him a good eſtate in it, or reſiſt damnation laying hold on him. Pſal.49.18.

Verſe 8. *The iuſt eſcapeth out of trouble, and the wicked ſhall come in his ſtead.*

GOds fauour and goodnes doth not free his ſeruants from afflictions, but deliuereth them out of afflictions. Whereinto he caſteth the wicked, though they bee not alwaies of the ſame kinde with thoſe which the godly ſuffer, but worſe and more durable, and ſuch as are mixed with Gods wrath, and poyſoned with the ſting of their owne euill conſcience. So that the ſaying of the Apoſtle is verified, that *iudgements begin at the houſe of God*, but end with, or rather perpetually continue with the *vngodly and ſinners*. The wicked laugh, when the godly weepe, and greatly inſult when they which feare the Lord groane vnder heauie preſſineſſe; but the time will come when the one ſhall obtaine freedome from calamities, and the other be compelled to take their turnes to fall into them: then he that mourned with griefe, ſhall exult with ioy, and hee that triumphed with gladneſſe, ſhall howle with deſperate woe and ſorrow. 1.Pet.4.17.

Verſe 9. *A hypocrite with his mouth corrupteth his neighbour: but the righteous ſhall be deliuered by knowledge.*

DIſſemblers, and ſuch as make a ſhew of godlineſſe, but deny the power thereof, are commonly moſt hurtfull ſeducers,

ducers, corrupting mens hearts with hurtfull ſpeeches, either deprauing that which is good, or iuſtifying that which is euill, and ſo they infect their mindes with erronious opinions, and ſtirre vp their hearts to ſinfull luſts, and peruert their waies with vngodly behauiour. But now to preuent the feares of the good, that they alſo are like to be drawne into miſchiefe, becauſe there are ſo many hypocrites, and to take away the cloakes and ſhifts from the wicked, which lay all the blame of their ſinnes on others which miſlead them, hee ſheweth the meanes whereby this hurt may be auoided, and that is, by getting knowledge, and being righteous: namely, to retaine vprightnes of heart, and a good conſcience, and to be acquainted both with Gods will, and the guilefull deluſions of theſe diſſembling peruerters, whereby good men are made warie, and ſo ſhielded from the peſtiferous tongues of ſuch perilous flatterers. For they preuaile to infect none but ſuch as are ignorant, or careleſſe of the gouernment of their eares, or behauiour.

Verſe 10. *In the proſperitie of the righteous the citie reioyceth, and when the wicked periſh there is ioy.*

IN *the proſperitie of the righteous*] That is, when things goe well with them, *the citie reioyceth*, that is, the honeſt and well diſpoſed citizens, and countrimen be inwardly glad, and outwardly declare their ioy, by cheerefull countenance, and ſpeeches, and other means, as opportunitie ſerueth to expreſſe the ſame. And ſo doe they alſo at the death, and ouerthrow of oppreſſors, and tyrants, and other wicked perſons, by whoſe fall the people riſe, and whoſe ruine is the repaire of the citie. He giueth no allowance to priuate reuenge, that any man in hatred of him from whom he hath receiued iniuries, ſhould take reioycing at his downfall: for *Iob* cleereth himſelfe by an oath of that imputation, ſaying, *If I reioyced at his deſtruction that hated me, or was moued to ioy when euill came vpon him. Neither haue I ſuffered my mouth to ſinne, by wiſhing a curſe vnto his ſoule*, &c. Neither is it lawfull to delight in the miſerie

Iob 31.29.

misery of a creature, especially such an one as man is, bearing the stampe of Gods image, although lamentably defaced in the wicked, but the consequent of euill mens ruine is the subiect of good mens ioy, and that is the tranquilitie of the Church, the freedome of the righteous from the wrongs they sustaine, the publike welfare ensuing thereupon.

Vers. 11. *By the blessing of the righteous the city is exalted: but it is subuerted by the mouth of the wicked.*

THe meaning is, that iust men are very beneficiall to the societies of men by their religious, prudent, and profitable speeches, for so the word *blessing* signifieth in many places: and so it is here meant, as the Antithesis sheweth: & so a poore man in aduersity, may as well be an instrument of good to his countrey, as a rich man in prosperity, as *Salomon* testifieth, Eccles. 9. 15. On the other side, the wicked with his mouth and hurtfull words, doth worke mischiefe among whom hee conuerseth. And this seemeth to bee placed next after the former sentence, as a reason annexed vnto it, for the confirmation of it; for there is due cause why the aduancement and prosperity of iust men should bee as it were celebrated with the mirth of the people, for as much as they haue benefactors raised vp vnto them, who will destinate their owne wealth and preferment to the generall good of many; and why they should conceiue so much comfort by the death or fall of vngodly persons, fithence the whole towne, city, or countrey is deliuered from the mischiefe or danger of a common spoiler.

Verse 12. *He that is destitute of wisdome, despiseth his neighbour: but a man of vnderstanding will keepe silence.*

A Foolish man which hath a beggerly heart, as the words signifie, being void of sound iudgement, and sanctified knowledge of Gods holy will, desireth to vilifie others, especially such as feare God, and to make them appeare base and contemptible. And this is done sometimes in bitter anger, by *Chasar leb.*

railing, reuiling, and contumelious reproches; and sometimes in scurrill mirth, by girding iests and laughter; and sometimes in hidden craft, by false reports and slanders. But they which haue more wisedome, will frame themselues to better behauiour: they will not onely keepe silence from offering that indignitie to them that prouoke them not thereunto, but will also forbeare to requite them with reproches, which haue not spared to seeke their disgrace. For so doth *Dauid* testifie of himselfe in this case: *I am as a man that heareth not, and as a dumbe man that openeth not his mouth.* Psal. 38. 13.

Vers. 13. *He that goeth about as a tale-bearer, discouereth a secret, but he that is of a faithfull heart, concealeth a matter.*

IN this place, and in the nineteenth of Leuiticus, vers. 16. and elsewhere the holy Ghost compareth busi-bodies, and such as delight to deale in other mens matters, to pettie chapmen, and pedlers, which carrie wares about, selling in one place, and buying in another, and two markes of leaudnesse he brandeth them with; as first, that they haue false and vnfaithfull hearts: and then that they haue loose and blabbing tongues that can keepe no counsell, but tell all that they heare. They will draw on men by their newes and reports to open their minds and secrets vnto them, which after they will publish to others. From both which vices he cleareth all good men, their hearts are faithfull, and their tongues are silent to couer such matters as loue requireth them to hide, and duty and conscience doe not bind them to lay open.

Vers. 14. *Where no counsell is, the people fall: but where many counsellors are, there is health.*

WHere there is counsell) Where godly and holy instruction for guiding the heart and behauiour, & graue and prudent aduice for gouernment of state, either domesticall, or publike, doe faile, there *the people doe fall*, that is, the gouernours themselues, and they that are in subiection to them,

them, doe runne into many miſchiefes of grieuous diſorders, and miſerable deſtruction. For what in that caſe is to be expected from ſuperiours, but violence and oppreſſion? And what from inferiours, but falſhood and diſobedience? And what from all ſorts, but impietie and wickedneſſe? And what then from God, but heauie ſtrokes and puniſhments? *But where many counſellers are*, which bee faithfull, and giue wiſe and wholeſome counſell, and that is alſo imbraced and followed, there is health, that is, religion and iuſtice, peace, plentie, and ſafety, with Gods gratious fauour and bleſſing.

Verſ. 15. *He that is ſurety for a ſtranger ſhall wholly be broken: but he that hateth thoſe that clap hands, is ſure.*

HIs purpoſe here is to giue men admonition to beware of ſuretiſhip: which he doth infer by two reaſons, firſt, from the hurt and danger which they run into that bee not well aduiſed therein: and ſecondly, from the peace and ſafety which they enioy that heedfully auoide the perill thereof. Now hee doth not abſolutely condemne all ſuretiſhip (for then would *Paul* haue neuer vndertaken for *Oneſimus*) but raſhneſſe only therein is that which is here, and in other places reproued. For it may ſometimes be a worke of mercy to become ſurety, as wel as to lend, or giue. By *ſtranger*, is not meant al, or only vnknowne perſons. For it may fall out to be a dutie of Chriſtian loue, that way to helpe and relieue ſome ſuch as wee were neuer before acquainted with, and a neere neighbour, a familiar friend, a kinſman, a brother may in this caſe be a ſtranger to vs, when it is not ſafe to vndertake for him. As firſt, if there bee like to grow detriment to the borrower, as taking money, or any other commodities vpon hard conditions, and at vnreaſonable rates, or for needleſſe expences, and vnthriftineſſe, or any way to the hurt of his ſtate or conſcience. Secondly, if it tend to the hurt and damage of the lender, that hee is in danger to bee defeated of his owne, and to ſuſtaine loſſe by our meanes, if we our ſelues are to be intangled by it, the ſum and value of the debt being more then wee are able either to pay,

or well to ſpare: when ones owne creditors by that occaſion, muſt be defrauded of their due, when our wiues, children, & families, which haue alſo an intereſt in our ſubſtance, ſhall be robbed of their portion and maintenance, and bereaued of the fruit of their owne labours. Then he ſheweth a remedie againſt it, to hate ſuch as clap hands, that is, to hate and feare to bee clapper of hands our ſelues, for the ratifying and confirmation of promiſes in this vnaduiſed ſuretiſhip, and ſo we ſhall be ſafe and ſure in this behalfe. Prouided yet, that we take not other courſes that be couſen-germanes to it, and as dangerous and hurtfull as that is: as negligently without all care and regard to run into debts and arrerages, or venturouſly without due conſideration of mens faithfulneſſe, and ability, to lend forth our money, wares, or cattell, and ſo to put our ſtate into the hands of ſtrangers.

Verſ. 16. *A gratious woman maintaineth* her *honour, as ſtrong men keepe riches.*

A *Gratious woman*] Which is endued with the feare of God, and the heauenly gifts of the holy Ghoſt, *doth maintain*, that is, doth both get and hold a reuerent eſtimation and credit, *as ſtrong men* be of ability to obtaine wealth, and riches, and to defend that which they haue. A man with great ſtrength, being alſo induſtrious and prudent, through labour and trauell, will in time compaſſe no ſmall commodity: and ſo will this godly woman by her piety, modeſty, meekeneſſe, with all other good endowments of minde, and vertues of conuerſation, purchaſe vnto her ſelfe great praiſe and commendation from thoſe whoſe liking, approbation, and teſtimonie is of any value. Likewiſe mighty men (eſpecially when they are well armed) hold faſt their money and ſubſtance, it is not eaſie to rob them of their goods, but a more difficult matter it is to bereaue and ſpoile an honeſt religious matrone of her truth, chaſtity, and goodneſſe, whereby ſhe ſhould be expoſed to ſhame and reproch.

Verſ. 17.

Verſ. 17. *Hee that is a mercifull man rewardeth his owne ſoule: but he that is cruell troubleth his owne fleſh.*

BY *a mercifull man*, is meant ſuch a one, as with a tender & pitifull heart doth good both to the bodies and ſoules of men according to their need, and his owne ability. And freely alſo remitteth wrongs, and paſſeth by offences without reuengement. Where it is ſaid that *he rewardeth his owne ſoule*, the ſenſe is, that he procureth to himſelfe both for ſoule & body a reward from God, & that as certaine, as large, and continuall, as if the fulneſſe of power were in his owne hand, to beſtow vpon himſelfe as much happines for as long time as his heart could poſſibly deſire.

But he that is cruell] Which either in violence or rigor vſeth to offer men hard meaſure, or ſhutteth vp his compaſſion from them that are in affliction, that he will no way relieue or ſeeke to comfort, troubleth his owne *fleſh*, that is, hurteth his owne body, and in like manner his ſoule alſo.

Verſ. 18. *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke: but he that ſoweth righteouſneſſe, ſhall receiue a ſure reward.*

THe *wicked worketh a deceitfull worke*] Hee is continually practiſing of ſome euill, which will neuer faile, to make his expectation to faile. *But he that ſoweth righteouſnes*, which conſtantly, and conſcionably is exerciſed in doing good, *ſhall haue a ſure reward*, partly in this life, with a competent meaſure of comfortable proſperity, and perfectly in the life to come, with glorious immortality. The ſenſe will be the better diſcerned, if the oppoſition be ſet downe in this manner: The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke by ſowing of iniquitie, and therefore ſhall be deceiued in his reward: but the godly worketh a faithfull worke by ſowing of righteouſneſſe, and therefore ſhall receiue a ſure reward.

Verſ. 19. *So righteouſneſſe leadeth to life, and he that followeth euill, ſeeketh his owne death.*

THis verſe is inferred vpon the former, by way of explication, to ſhew what he meant by the deceiueable worke of the wicked, and the ſure wages of the righteous. And firſt hee beginneth with the latter, according to the manner of the Hebrewes, declaring that life, vnderſtanding thereby immortality, and all the bleſſedneſſe annexed vnto it, is that ſure reward which all godly men may vndoubtedly expect: and deſtruction both of ſoule and body eternally, is the end whereunto the deceitfull worke will bring wicked men, which doe ſo much deceiue themſelues by a greedy deſire of ſatisfying their ſinfull luſts.

Verſ. 20. *They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord: but they that are vpright in their way, are his delight.*

BY *froward in heart*, he meaneth not only ſuch as are inclined to anger and bitternes, which are of a crabbed, ſowre, and churliſh diſpoſition; but all that are wilfull in any ſinfull courſe, though with neuer ſo great mirth and laughter. Yea many times exceſſiue pleaſure, and ſporting and merriment, with good fellowſhip, as men account it, is the very ſubiect of their frowardneſſe, and that which they ſo obſtinately ſtand in. And though they pretend reaſon for their doing, & ſeeme ſmoothly to defend it, without peruerſeneſſe, yet the hart being ſetled in reſolution of it owne purpoſe, the Lord taketh notice of it, and therefore abhorreth them for the preſent, and will make his iudgements to manifeſt his deteſtation of them hereafter. *But they that are vpright in their way* and heart, (as the other are froward in heart and behauiour) are greatly beloued of God now, and ſhall more fully ſee, and feele, and enioy the comfort and happineſſe of his fauour in time to come.

Verſ. 21.

Verſ. 21. *Though hand* ioyne *in hand, the wicked ſhall not be vnpuniſhed, but the ſeed of the righteous ſhall eſcape.*

THough vngodly men haue many friends, and ſuch as bee mighty: though they ioyne all their forces together to aide and defend one another, or all of them one, yet they ſhall not be able to miniſter any helpe or ſuccour when the Lord taketh them in hand to plague them. On the other ſide, though righteous men ſeeme to bee in great perill, and haue fewer friends, and thoſe alſo poore and feeble, yet they ſhall goe out and be deliuered, and not onely ſo, but their children and poſterity alſo ſhall bee preſerued: ſo that whereas many ſtrong wicked men cannot deliuer one, one weake godly man ſhall deliuer many.

Verſ. 22. *As a iewell of gold in a ſwines ſnout: ſo is a faire woman that lacketh diſcretion.*

AS a ring of gold, or any other ornament doth not adorne but misbecome a ſwine, no more doth beautie, ſtature, ſtength, wit, apparell, wealth, or any other externall thing, bring true praiſe or commendation either to man or woman, which wanteth true wiſedome or vnderſtanding. For no gifts of nature, or of the body are true ornaments, but rather blemiſhes, & eye-ſores, without grace: faire iewels cannot yeeld excellencie to foule creatures, but are defaced and diſgraced by them, as the filthie ſow would defile the moſt pretious ring, by digging in the dirt, and wallowing in the mire, & doing other like facts whereunto the ſwiniſh beaſt is accuſtomed. Now wicked women, and graceleſſe men, are more foule and brutiſh then the dirtieſt hogge, tumbling in the filth and ſtink of pride, wantonneſſe, vnchaſtity, riot, contention, and ſuch other vices: if what colour then ſoeuer their faces bee, or of whatſoeuer feature their perſons be, or how gorgeous ſoeuer their garments be, or how great ſoeuer their dignities be, the Lord, and wiſe men diſcerne nothing in them but deformity.

Verſe 23. *The deſire of the righteous is onely good: but the hope of the wicked is indignation.*

WE muſt beware here that we iuſtifie not al the wiſhes and deſires to bee good, which righteous men conceiue, nor condemne all to be vnrighteous which conceiue any wiſhes and deſires that bee not good: for then ſhould *Dauid* be excluded out of the number of the righteous, or elſe his deſire of hauing *Bathſheba*, or wiſhing to know the number of the people ſhould bee allowed. But hee vnderſtandeth the maine ſtreame of their deſires, the courſe and current of their hearts is to godlineſſe and goodneſſe, though ſometimes they corrupt nature in themſelues, and the tempeſtuous temptations of Satan do violently driue their thoughts another way; which is wholly contrary in the wicked. For they deſire nothing but miſchiefe and euill, & therfore in the end they ſhall receiue nothing but miſerie and puniſhment, which will be ſo great and ſo grieuous, as will make them raue and rage with madneſſe and furie, eſpecially becauſe they looked for a better ſtate. Thus then ſtandeth the oppoſition: the deſire of the righteous is onely good, and therefore their hope ſhall end in conſolation: but the deſire of the wicked is onely euill, and therefore their hope ſhall end in indignation.

Verſe 24. *There is that ſcattereth, and is more increaſed: but he that ſpareth more then right*, commeth *ſurely to powertie.*

THey that diſperſe their goods, this way and that, beſtowing them vpon ſuch as are in want and neceſſity, or otherwiſe imploying them for the publike benefit of many, they that are readie and willing to part with their goods or mony, for the reliefe of ſuch as are in want or neceſſitie, or to any other good vſes, are ſaid to ſcatter them: and ſuch take the beſt courſe to increaſe them, as ſowing of corne is a meanes to helpe a man more and more.

And this he deliuereth with great wiſedome and warines, ſaying,

ſaying, that ſome are more increaſed and not all: for many ſcatter vpon dice, and cards, and dogges, and whores, and ſuch like, and they may looke to be ſtript of all the reſt, rather then to adde to that which they haue. On the other ſide, hee that keepeth in that which hee ought to lay out, and ſpareth that which dutie requireth him to ſpend, doth play the euill husband for the impouerifhing of his owne eſtate.

Verſe 25. *The liberall ſoule ſhall wax fat, and he that giueth plentifully ſhall powre foorth.*

THeſe words haue affinitie with the former part of the verſe next before, and are ioyned to it partly in way of explication, and partly in way of illuſtration. And therefore firſt hee ſheweth who obtaine that bleſſing to increaſe by ſcattering, and that is they whoſe liberalitie beginneth at their hearts: and then he declareth the proſperous ſucceſſe thereof by a ſimilitude from wel-ſprings, which receiue as much water inwardly, as they ſend foorth outwardly, which, if they ſhould faile of iſſue, would alſo faile of fulnes, the waters diuerting their courſe ſome other way, where they might haue better paſſage, or elſe infuſing themſelues in the earth, and mould of the adiacent places round about, & ſo make a quagmire. The ſame compariſon doth *Iſaiah* vſe for the ſame purpoſe: *The Lord ſhall ſatisfie thy ſoule continually in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou ſhalt be like a watred garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters faile not.* Iſai. 58. 11.

Verſ. 26. *He that withdraweth corne, the people wil curſe him: but bleſſing ſhall be vpon the head of him that ſelleth corne.*

IT is not vnlawfull to keepe in corne, as *Ioſeph* did in the time of plentie to be prouided againſt ſcarcitie and dearth: but when we may ſpare it, and others neede it, then to withhold the ſelling thereof in hope to raiſe the price, this tendeth to a common hurt, and therefore will cauſe a common complaint of the people againſt vs. But on the other ſide, bleſſing ſhall bee on his head that ſelleth corne, hee ſhall not only

only haue the good teſtimonie and prayers of men beneath, but the bleſſing of God himſelfe from aboue deſcend vpon him. Prouided that his heart be vpright therein, not ſo much reſpecting the price in ſelfe-loue, as the profiting of his brother in Chriſtian charitie: and that hee vſe all other due circumſtances accordingly. As to ſell that which is good at a reaſonable rate, and performe it in due ſeaſon, and full meaſure and ſuch like.

Verſe 27. *Hee that diligently ſeeketh good, ſhall get fauour: but he that ſeeketh euill, it ſhall come to him.*

HE that ſeeketh careſully with an vpright heart to benefit thoſe among whom hee liueth in any good manner, taketh the beſt way to win the hearts of the people, and is like to haue the hearts of good men knit vnto him, and certaine to obtaine and enioy Gods fauour and louing kindneſſe. And he that plotteth, or practiſeth miſchiefe againſt others, of all others ſhall be moſt hurt thereby himſelfe. For the Lord is not vnacquainted with the waies of men, with their deſires, endeuours, and actions: and hee loueth thoſe who with a faithfull heart addict themſelues to weldoing, and will incline the affections of men, whoſe kindneſſe is worth any eſtimation, to be kinde vnto them: and he will alſo requite to hurtfull and malignant miſcreants their owne meaſure, according to our prouerbs, Selfe doe, ſelfe haue: alſo, He that doth watch harme, ſhall not faile to catch harme. And notwithſtanding that their miſchieuous deſignes take none effect, (as *Balaam* could not obtaine his purpoſe to curſe Iſrael) yet the very attempt, yea the deſire ſhall not eſcape without puniſhment, which ſhal be inflicted vpon them in due ſeaſon.

Verſe 28. *Hee that truſteth in his riches, ſhall fall: but the righteous ſhall floriſh as a branch.*

HE that ſo repoſeth vpon his wealth, as that for loue, and deſire thereof, he is willing, and in confidence thereof he is

is bold to ſin againſt God; he which hopeth it will keepe him from troubles, or rid him out of troubles, or any way conferre happineſſe to him, this man ſhall ſurely be brought down, and fall into miſchiefe. And ſo by the ſame proportion, ſhall all thoſe which truſt to men, or to wit, or to any other creature. On the other ſide, iuſt men are all on the mending hand; they are well planted, they grow in a fruitfull ground by the riuers of water, they haue the Lord Ieſus Chriſt for their roote, they haue God the Father to dreſſe and keepe them, and therefore they ſhall floriſh as a branch which groweth and hath greene leaues. The drought of aduerſitie ſhall not hurt thē, the dewes of wholeſome proſperitie ſhall not faile them. They ſhall haue ſafetie for their bodies, graces for their ſoules, competency for their ſtate, and all good furtherances for their euerlaſting glorie. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: The wicked truſt in their riches, and they ſhall fall like rotten boughes; but the righteous truſt in the Lord, and they ſhall grow like flouriſhing branches.

Verſ. 29. *Hee that troubleth his owne houſe ſhall inherit the winde, and the foole ſhall be ſeruant to the wiſe in heart.*

HE is ſaid to trouble his houſe, which doth miſpend his goods, and miſguide his affaires, and miſgouerneth his people that dwell with him. That either doth corrupt them with ſinfulnes, or moleſt them with frowardnes, or afflict them with miſerie. When he either maketh them patients to beare the burthen of his follie, or agents to commit follie with him. He ſhall inherit the winde, that is, ſhall bring all to nothing. His ſubſtance ſhall flie vp like ſmoake into the ayre, and nothing bee left to maintaine him on earth. And when all his goods are gone, his libertie muſt goe after. This foole ſhall ſhall be ſeruant to the wiſe in heart, that is, to one who is more prouident, diſcreete and carefull for his ſtate and houſehold. They were wont in great wants to ſell themſelues for ſeruants, as the Egyptians did in *Ioſephs* time. And for great debts to bee taken by the creditors, and either made their bond- Gen. 47. 19.

men,

men, or else sold to others. And one of these, saith he, is like to be the case of this vnthriftie trouble-house.

Vers. 30. *The fruit of the righteous is as a tree of life, and he that winneth soules is wise.*

THe meaning of these words is, that a godly man is very plentifull in bringing forth fruit, and his fruit exceeding profitable to them that receiue it. Especially his instructions, consolations, prayers, and other spirituall means that he vseth, to conuert, or confirme the harts of his brethren. And he himselfe also is not without the fruit of his owne fruit; which is intimated here by pronouncing him wise that winneth soules, that is, which with desire and endeauour faithfully and discreetly, by Gods owne meanes, according to his place and calling either doth draw men out of their sinnes and ignorance, or else faileth of successe therein, not by his negligence, and want of loue; but rather by their stubbornesse and want of will. And herewith the Prophet doth satisfie himselfe, whatsoeuer should bee the issue of his ministery. *Now saith the Lord that formed me from the wombe to bee his seruant: that I may bring Iacob againe to him, though Israel bee not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord: and my God shall be my strength.* On the other side we dare not take vpon vs to iustifie the hearts and states of all those which haue been occasions of any mans conuersion, if it be not their fruit: nor to extenuate the efficacie of euery vnregenerate mans ministery, that his doctrine should win none to saluation. It is granted without question or gainsaying, that hee may prepare before and build vp after, and we remember not any such stint or restraint spoken of, but that he may also conuert, especially before his life is stained with any sinfull behauiour, that might bring his ministery into contempt. The power of preaching standeth in the ordinance of God, by the worke of his spirit, and not in the person of the messenger that doth publish it.

Esa. 49. 4.

Vers. 31.

Verſ. 13. *Behold, the righteous ſhall bee recompenced on earth: how much more the wicked and the ſinner?*

THe matter which he is about to ſpeak of, is both certaine and waighty, and ſuch as concerneth euery man to looke to in regard of his owne caſe: and therefore he prefixeth this word, *Behold*, to moue all to ſerious conſideration of that which is to be ſaid. And that is firſt touching the godly, that they muſt be corrected for their faults when they offend, euen in ſuch manner and meaſure as holdeth ſome proportion with their offences, though not in equality, for then who ſhould be able to abide it? The word *recompence*, therefore in this place is not taken for reuengement, or puniſhment proceeding from Gods indignation, but a louing chaſtiſement, though it be ſharpe, according to the threatning of parents to their children, whom they be farre from hating, or hurting: I will ſurely pay you for this. And that it ſhould appeare that nothing is intended againſt them, for the perill of their euerlaſting ſtate, there is a limitation annexed, that it is to be onely in the earth. Next he ſheweth the condition of the wicked, that if the righteous ſcape not ſcotfree, they muſt in no ſort bee ſpared, but feele more heauie and fearefull puniſhments, though not in the earth, yet in the world to come.

CHAPTER. XII.

Verſ. 1. *He that loueth correction, loueth knowledge: but he that hateth correction, is bruiſh.*

HE *that loueth inſtruction*] Which doth apply himſelfe to ſeeke it, by thoſe meanes which are ordained of God for his people to bee inſtructed by, and accepteth and maketh vſe of it, when it is offered to him, *he loueth knowledge*, that is, hath it in due eſtimation, and truly deſireth it, & therefore

fore ſhall alſo accordingly obtaine it. *But he that hateth correction*, which refuſeth all inſtruction, but eſpecially will not endure to be reproued, or corrected, *he is brutiſh*, a beaſt in a mans ſhape, a foole in a high degree of follie, both for an ignorant mind and rude behauiour, and wretched condition.

Verſ. 2. *A good man getteth fauour of the Lord: but a man of wicked imagination will he condemne.*

A *Good man*, which ſetteth his heart to deuiſe of goodnes, and performeth the ſame in practiſe, *getteth fauour of the Lord*, that is, enioyeth the aſſurance and comfort of his louing kindneſſe in his ſoule, and the good effects thereof both in ſoule and body, and euery other way. *But a man of wicked imaginations*, &c. It is the deſcription of a wicked man by a periphraſis, that he is as it were made of ſinfull thoughts and purpoſes, and is in the middeſt of them.

A good man may ſomtimes haue euill imaginations, as *Dauid* had to deſtroy the whole houſe of *Nabal*, but it was the imagination of the man, and he was not a man of ſuch imaginations. *He will condemne*, &c. The diſpleaſure of God againſt him is declared by the effect, he will conuince him, and finde him guiltie, that is, paſſe ſentence vpon him, and cauſe execution to be done accordingly. Thus then ſtandeth the oppoſition: A good man of godly meditations getteth fauour of the Lord, who therefore will ſaue him; but an euill man of wicked imaginations, incurreth the diſpleaſure of the Lord, who therefore will condemne him.

Verſ. 3. *A man cannot be eſtabliſhed by wickedneſſe: but the root of the righteous cannot be moued.*

SInfulneſſe may ſeeme to ſerue a mans turne, but in the end it ſhall appeare it neuer did him good. For howſoeuer it is an occaſion of lifting many men vp on hie in proſperity, yet it giueth them no ſure footing in their ſtate, but downe they fal, and then it had been better for them to haue ſtood ſtill on the ground.

ground. Wicked men often grow greater, and faſter then others, but their ſetling is not ſo faſt and firme, as the other part ſheweth. The righteous though they be not ſo tall and ſpreading vpwards, yet they take roote the ſtronger downwards: and though their boughes be ſhaken aboue, yet that will not looſen his hold beneath. This is the oppoſition: The vngodly ſhall not be eſtabliſhed by wickedneſſe, but his root ſhall be plucked vp; but the righteous ſhall bee eſtabliſhed by godlineſſe, and his root ſhall not be moued.

Verſ. 4. *A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband: but ſhe that maketh him aſhamed is a rottenneſſe in his bones.*

A *Vertuous woman*, which feareth God, and loueth her huſband, and is faithfull in her calling, *is a crowne to her huſband*, ſhe is for his honour and credit, and conſequently for his profit and comfort. *But ſhe that maketh him aſhamed*, which either by her leaudneſſe and rudeneſſe, doth bring him into contempt, or at leaſt maketh him to hold downe his head, or by negligence, pride and waſtfulneſſe doth weaken his eſtate, and bringeth him to want, ſhe *is a rottenneſſe in his bones*, that is, a torment and corraſiue to his heart, as grieuous as the ach of the bones, or corruption of the marrow, which is more painfull and incurable then an vlcer in the fleſh. The Antitheſis is thus: A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband, and ſo a great ioy and gladneſſe to his heart: but a vicious woman is a ſhame to her husband, and as a rottenneſſe in his bones.

Verſ. 5. *The thoughts of the iuſt are right: but the counſels of the wicked are deceit.*

GOdly men are not altogether void of thoughts that are not right and allowable: ſomtimes Satan caſteth in matter to turne them out of the right courſe: ſometimes their owne fleſh will play it part, and ſtirre vp deſire of commodity and praiſe, and pleaſures, and ſuch like in them: but theſe are

as

as the muddineſſe that may be for a time in a good fountaine that is troubled: theſe they allow not: theſe they reſiſt, and iudge themſelues for; and therefore God taketh notice onely of them that are good tending to his ſeruice and glory, their owne ſaluation, and the benefit of their brethren. On the other ſide, *the counſels of the wicked*, that is, their deuices, plots, and purpoſes in themſelues (for they are here rather the work of the minde then of the tongue, and oppoſed to the thoughts of the godly) are deceit, tending either to the circumuention and wronging of others, or to the cloaking and hiding of their owne ſinfulneſſe.

Verſ. 6. *The talking of the wicked is to lie in waite for blood: but the mouth of the righteous will deliuer them.*

THeſe words are not to bee vnderſtood to meane all ſorts of wicked men, but ſuch as are malitious: and their ſpeeches too, of ſuch as they maligne, doe principally tend to the inſnaring and catching of them, and that to their deſtruction, ſo farre as they can effect it: if not by violence vpon their bodies to the taking away of their liues, yet by oppreſſion otherwiſe to the ruine of their eſtate. Now the contrarie is to bee found in the godly, who vſe their lips as much as in them is, to ſuccour ſuch as the wicked lie in waite for: either as *Pauls* nephew did, by diſcouering the practiſes againſt them, or being ſuters for them, or cleering their innocency. And this is ſpoken of their endeauour, and not of the euent, for that is many times otherwiſe.

Verſ. 7. *God ouerthroweth the wicked, and they are not: but the houſe of the righteous ſhall ſtand.*

WHen the ſtate of the vngodly which are not Gods choſen, changeth from proſperity to aduerſitie, it ſeldome ſtayeth till they be vtterly deſtroyed, both themſelues, and their houſes: This word, *are not*, ſignifieth a ſlaughter and killing, as it is ſpoken of the murthering of the infants by *Herod*,

rod, Mat. 2.18. Ier. 31.15. *In Rama was a voice heard, mourning, and weeping, and great lamentation: Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, becauſe they were not.* But here is more vnderſtood, then the loſſe of naturall life, and that is, the perdition of ſoule and body. And yet not the extinction of either: for the ſoule ſhall neuer vaniſh away, nor the body for euer: they ſhall not find ſo much mercie at Gods hands. Their being ſhall not ceaſe, but their comfortable and well being. They ſhall bee euerlaſting, euerlaſtingly to beare the burthen of Gods wrath, and to ſuffer the vnſufferable torment of death and damnation. *But the houſe of the righteous*, that is, he, and thoſe things which appertaine vnto him, ſhall be preſerued from being ouerthrowne to ruine. His ſoule may be aſſaulted with tentations, and his body afflicted with many maladies, and many blaſts of croſſes and afflictions may trouble him ſore: yea both himſelfe and his eſtate may ſeeme to come to an end, but it is only as a tree tranſplanted, and not extirpated, or rooted out; for as much as it is ſet in better ground: or as an houſe remoued and taken downe, to be made a firmer, and more beautifull building, but fall downe and periſh it doth not.

Verſ. 8. *A man ſhall bee commended according to his wiſedome: but the froward in heart ſhall be deſpiſed.*

AS euery one is more wiſe & godly, ſo ſhall he haue more true praiſe & honor: Somtimes, & very often the wicked ſhal commend him, commonly the righteous, and alwaies the Lord himſelfe, but moſt of all at the laſt day, before all men, and Angels, as our Sauiour telleth vs in the 25. of Matth. Contrariwiſe *the froward in heart*, ſuch whoſe harts reiect al good inſtructions and graces, *ſhall be deſpiſed*, and brought to contempt among men in this life, or their faults breake out after they are dead, or be manifeſted before all the world at the day of the Lord. This is the oppoſition; He that is vpright of hart ſhall be commended for his wiſedome: but he that is froward of heart, ſhall be deſpiſed for his follie.

Verse 9. *He that is despised, and is his owne seruant, is better then he that boasteth himselfe, and lacketh bread.*

HE *that is despised*, that is, of meane estate, for which the foolish proud worldlings commonly haue men in contempt, *and is his owne seruant*, that is, industrious and diligent by labour to prouide himselfe of things that be needfull, (and so euer they may truly bee called their owne seruants, that are faithfull in another mans seruice) *is better then he that boasteth himselfe*, that is, which standeth vpon his reputation, and yet lacketh bread, hath little or nothing to maintaine himselfe withall: for bread is put here for all manner of necessarie prouision. He is the better man, and in the better state whom the Lord doth more regard; which doth performe the better offices to his brethren; who doth eate the labours of his hands, and comfortably enioyeth the fruite of his trauailes; whose wisedome and prouidence all wise men take notice of and commend.

Verse 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, but the mercies of the wicked are cruell.*

THe purpose and drift of these words tendeth to this, that euery godly and righteous man is also mercifull: and that no wicked person can possibly haue any true pitie or compassion in him. *A righteous man*, euery one that feareth God and is faithfull, *regardeth the life of his beast*, his loue and kindnes and good dealing is so plentifull to men, and especially those which depend vpon him, and be of his charge, and at his finding, that it floweth ouer also to the cattell, and creatures which he owneth or vseth, or is put in trust to look to, or hath opportunitie offered to preserue from hurt or perishing. *But the mercies of the wicked*, those actions and waies of theirs which carrie the faireſt shew and colour of mercie, *are cruell*, haue cruelty mixed therewith, either in purpose or manner or euent insuing thereupon: either the hurt onely benefiting an

other: or doe a good turne to a man in a ſmaller matter, and miſchiefe to the ſame, in a greater; by poyſoning the ſoule, vnder pretence of pleaſuring him by ſome outward commoditie: or laying a baite for him, by giuing a trifle, to draw him into his net, for the ouerthrow, or impairing of his eſtate, &c. And if there be ſuch cruelcie in their kindneſſe, in their liberalitie, in their mercie; what is to be looked for in their hatred, in their diſpleaſure, in their wrath and fiercenes?

Verſ. 11. *He that tilleth his land, ſhall be ſatisfied with bread: but he that followeth the idle, is deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

HE *that tilleth his land*] Which is induſtrious and faithfull to doe good in any honeſt vocation: although he inſtanceth in this one worke of husbandrie, a ſet ſeruice very laudable and praiſe worthie, for the common vtilitie, and generall neceſſitie of it, *ſhall be ſatisfied with bread*, ſhall haue competencie of all things that are needfull for him, and that with comfort and good contentation, if hee be godly and religious alſo, and not prodigall, or greedie of gaine: for pietie bringeth contentment: but it is as poſſible to fill vp a bottomleſſe gulfe with water, as to ſatisfie a voluptuous perſon which deuoureth wealth as faſt as hee getteth it; or a rauenous worldling whoſe heart and deſire is like to hell and the graue, inceſſantly hungrie. *But he that followeth the idle*, vaine fellowes, which giue themſelues to no good trade or occupation, and is idle as they are, *is deſtitute of vnderſtanding*, plaieth the foole, and ſhall feele the ſmart and paine of it, with miſerable and grieuous penurie, as wanting meanes of maintenance, and the help of friends to relieue him, and reſolution of minde to vndergoe ſo heauie a burthen with patience.

The oppoſition is: He that tilleth his land is wiſe, and ſhall be ſatisfied with bread: but hee that followeth the idle, or is idle (for that is the meaning) is deſtitute of vnderſtanding, and ſhall bee filled with pouertie. So is the ſupplie made: Chap. 28. 19.

Vers. 12. *The wicked desireth the defence of them that be euill: but the roote of the righteous giueth it.*

WHen the vngodly do come into perils, and afflictions, and troubles doe come vpon them, all their hope of helpe resteth wholly in men, and those not the godly which might direct them, or pray for them, but sinfull persons as bad as themselues, whose fauour and power they trust vnto, but in vaine, for they are deceiued by them: but the righteous are not, or neede not to bee driuen to such shifts, the Lord Iesus Christ their roote vndertaketh their preseruation, and doth not onely make a shew thereof, but effectually performeth it.

Verse 13. *The euill man is snared by the wickednesse of his lips, but the wise shall come out of aduersitie.*

AS wicked men doe maliciously abuse their tongues to the hurt of others, so also many times they ouershoote themselues so farre as that aduantage is taken of their words to their owne peril and hurt: they either alienate their friends, or prouoke their enemies, or expose themselues to the will and power of them that lie in waite for them, or cast themselues into the Magistrates hand, for seditious or contemptuous speeches: finally, by committing of one absurditie, or other, they are intangled and caught, as a bird in a net, or a beast in a toyle; as on the other side the godly doe oftentimes helpe themselues out of troubles by the wisedome of their speeches. For sometimes the equitie of their cause is found out and fauoured by reason of their forcible and good arguments vsed and pressed in their apologie: sometimes their mild behauiour and softnes of speech much worketh vpon their aduersaries, being not implacable, to pacifie their displeasure, and to mitigate their fiercenes: sometimes friends are solicited, and perswaded by their wise discourse to stand in their defence, or to intercede for them: and alwaies their prayers to God are effectuall for their helpe and succour.

Verſe 14. *A man ſhall be ſatiat with good things by the fruite of his mouth, and the recompence of a mans hands ſhall God giue vnto him.*

A *Man ſhall be ſatiate with good things*, &c. That is, ſhall be recompenſed by the Lord with great bleſſings, for the good vſage of his tongue, when hee ſpeaketh to Gods glorie, and the edification of his brethren, or for iuſtice and equitie in the behalfe of them that are wronged, and iniuriouſly dealt with. He will ſtirre vp men to loue him, and ſhew kindneſſe vnto him, yea thoſe ſometimes which be of great place, and able to doe him much good, as it is ſaid, *he that loueth purenes of heart, for the grace of his lippes the King ſhall be his friend*, Prou. 22.11. But eſpecially hee himſelfe will beſtow vpon him all good things for this life, and graces for euerlaſting life, and glorie for life euerlaſting. *And the recompence*, &c. And ſo ſhall euery mans good workes be alſo rewarded with mercie and fauour, though there be nothing in them of deſert and merit.

Verſe 15. *The way of a foole is right in his owne eyes, but hee that heareth counſell is wiſe.*

T*He way of a foole*] The wicked courſe and behauiour of a ſinfull perſon, whom God reputeth a foole, (for it is not vnderſtood of an idiot, as may appeare by the compariſon betweene them, chap. 26.12. *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit, there is more hope of a foole then of him*) *is right in his owne eyes*; he liketh of it, and alloweth himſelfe in it, as ſafe & good for him to walke in, and conſequently reiecteth all good aduice, and admonitions: *But he that heareth counſell*, which ſuſpecteth his owne iudgement, and receiueth direction from them that are wiſe and godly, and obeyeth it, he *is wiſe*, ſheweth the wiſedome that he had before, and learneth more, and findeth the fruite of it by good effect.

Verse 16. *A fooles wrath is made knowne the same day, but a prudent man couereth shame.*

THe meaning of the holy Ghost is not to condemne all kinde of anger: for it is one of the powers of the soule which God created as an ornament in men, and godly anger is a part of Gods image in him, and a grace commended in *Moses*, *Elias*, *Elisha*, and our Sauiour himselfe, and hee that is alwaies altogether destitute of this doth prouoke God to bee angrie with him, for want of zeale and hatred of sinne, but it is a passionate anger that is here reproued, which is not a power of the soule but an imporencie. He that conceiueth the other is an agent, and doth a seruice to God: but hee that is moued with this, is a meere patient, and sinne hath in that case preuailed against him. Now it is said that a foole will be knowne the same day, that is, suddenly and speedily, as soone as he is prouoked, he will shew it by outcries, reulings or threatnings, or other such like signes of choller: But a wise man, so farre as his wisedome worketh, and his naturall corruption and infirmities breake not out, will hide shame, that is, will suppresse his anger, and passe by the iniuries offered to him, and not disgrace himselfe by returning reprochfull speeches to him that hath done him the wrong.

Verse 17. *He that speaketh truth, will shew righteousnes: but a false witnesse vseth deceit.*

HE *that speaketh*, ordinarily in his common speech, that which is true, *will shew righteousnes*, that is, will carrie himselfe iustly and further righteousnes with his testimonie, when he shall be publikely called thereunto. *But a false witnesse*, a false man becomming a false witnesse, *will vse deceit*, will make a shew of truth, and peraduenture vtter some part thereof, but with such craft and cunning, as shall be contrary to righteousnes, and hurtfull to any good cause. For the loue of the truth causeth the one to vtter it constantly in priuate, and therefore

therefore he will with good regard promote the ſame in publike, where it is more to bee honoured, and will doe the more good: and the other being an enemie to equity and iuſtice, cannot eaſily be induced to deale faithfully, and ſoundneſſe for the ſame.

Verſ. 18. *There is that ſpeaketh words like the pricking of a ſword: but the tongue of wiſe men is health.*

THere is, a brood and companie of ſinfull fooles, *which ſpeake words like the prickings of a ſword*, that is, dangerous and pernitious, which pierce deeper to the hurt of mens names and ſtates then the edge and point of a ſword doth to ones body. But the tongue of the wiſe is health, their ſpeeches are wholeſome and helpfull both to themſelues and others. The former ſort are as cruell and hurtfull manſlayers who abuſe their weapons to ſheading of blood, and the latter as mercifull and helpfull Surgeons which addreſſe themſelues to bind vp wounds, and apply plaiſters for the curing thereof, to the preſeruation of mens liues.

Verſ. 19. *The lip of truth ſhall be ſtable for euer, and a lying tongue but for a moment.*

THe meaning is, that ſuch as ſpeake the truth in vprightneſſe will not varie in their talke, but tell the ſame tale againe, and bee like to themſelues in that which they ſhall ſay, whereas liars be in and out, affirming and denying, and ſpeaking contradictions in the ſame matter. The true man is made ſtable and conſtant in his teſtimonie and aſſertions, partly by exerciſe, in that it is his cuſtome to vtter nothing but verity: partly by his affection, which cannot brooke variable affirmations; partly by the benefit of memorie, which is much confirmed by the vnchangeable matter of truth which he firſt deliuered: and of all theſe helpes the liar is deſtitute, and therefore it is no ſtrange thing to find him ſo vncertaine, and variable in his ſayings.

Verſ. 20. *Deceit commeth to the heart of them that practiſe miſchiefe, and ioy to the counſellers of peace.*

DEceit commeth to the heart, &c. That is, ſorrow & griefe commeth to the harts of them that plot miſchief againſt others by aduice or attempt, when they ſhall find themſelues deceiued in their deuices. For as much as they are often defeated of their purpoſes, their power failing their willes; whereas they conceiued ſome notable exploits of hurt, and trauelled with villanie, they bring forth a lie, and ſee all their proiects fruſtrate, when that which they abſolutely preſumed of, is totally preuented. And be it that they ſucceed in their attempts according to their deſires (as *Achab* ſeemed to get as good an eſtate in *Naboths* vineyard, as counſel could deuiſe (yet the conſequent therof faileth, the euent of it is nothing anſwerable to their precedent hopes, they looked for glory, and met with ſhame, they concluded of comfort and felicity, and find nothing but vexation, trouble and miſerie. But ſuch as vſe their thoughts and words to moue men to bee at peace with God and their neighbours, and to walke in the way of peace and good proſperity, ſhall not faile of the comfort of their faithfull and wholeſome counſell. For God will bleſſe them, and men will loue them, and their owne conſciences will continually miniſter matter of ioy and conſolation vnto them.

Verſ. 21. *The puniſhment of iniquitie ſhall not befall the iuſt, but the wicked are full of euill.*

AFflictions and corrections may come vpon the righteous, but no reuenging curſe tending to deſtruction, as if they were abiects. Wholeſome medicines (ſuch as croſſes are to the godly) are not wont to be miniſtred in hatred, and with purpoſe to kill, but in mercy and loue, for recouerie of health, and conſeruation of life. But the wicked are full of euill, both of guiltineſſe and continuall practiſe: according to the corruption of their hearts, which the righteous are purged from,

and

and therefore alſo of thoſe puniſhments which the righteous eſcape.

Verſ. 22. *The lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deale truly are his delight.*

THe ſenſe is plaine enough of it ſelfe, if the ſupply be made of that which is vnderſtood in both clauſes. The Lord abhorreth lying lips, that is, thoſe perſons that abuſe their lips to lying, which will alſo be falſe in their deeds: and he is well pleaſed with them that deale faithfully, which will likewiſe be true in their words. And by this ſaying, the ſpirit of God doth intimate the wretched and damnable eſtate of thoſe which vſe falſhood in their ſpeeches and actions: for what can tongue expreſſe, or mind apprehend, more horrible & hideous, then Gods indignation, proceeding from the greatneſſe of his hatred, when hee hath a creature in perfect deteſtation? And therefore alſo on the other ſide, the bleſſed condition of iuſt and true men is notified, with whom the Lord is ſo well pleaſed, as that hee reſpecteth them with ſingular contentment, they are his fauorites moſt deere vnto him, his ioy and pleaſure is in them, and then what euill can befall them, or what good, that is truly good, can be detained from them?

Verſe 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fooles publiſheth fooliſhneſſe.*

A *Prudent man*, he that is of good diſcretion, & hath learned to be warie & circumſpect, concealeth knowledge, not that he ſhutteth it vp altogether, without any vſe or benefit of it to others: for that were contrary to the profeſſion which the Prophet maketh of that wherein euery godly man ought to follow him; *I haue not hid thy righteouſneſſe within my heart, but I haue declared thy truth and thy ſaluation; I haue not concealed thy mercy and thy truth from the great congregation.* Pſalm. 40. 10. And that were contrary to the teſtimonie which is giuen of wiſe men, Chap. 15. 7. *The lips of the wiſe*

wise doe spread abroad knowledge. But he will obserue all good circumstances of speaking, that it bee in time and place, when good opportunitie doth require it, and good effect is like to be wrought by it. And contrariwise the heart of a foole which leadeth his tongue (for guide it hee doth not) doth set the tongue on worke either to vtter bad matter, or that which is good in bad manner, that euery man may see the follie which is in it.

Vers. 24. *The hand of the diligent shall beare rule: but the deceitfull shall be vnder tribute.*

THE *hand of the diligent*, that is, diligent men who vse their hands, or other members of their bodies, or else their minds to some honest and profitable trauel according to their calling *shall beare rule*, and attaine to some good place of estimation. But idle persons whom want and other occasions draw to deceitfull courses to shift for themselues, as wee haue shewed in the fourth verse of the tenth chapter, shall bee made vnderlings, and brought into subiection and seruilitie, if not of authoritie: for notwithstanding that diuers of them haue not power to command, or to punish, yet they are so much regarded and feared for their vprightnesse, as that their superiours oftentimes as well as their inferiours, bee afraid to fault in their presence, and are more willing that greater personages should haue knowledge of their offences then they. So then their diligence is a meanes either to promote them to great place, as many times it commeth to passe, or else to win them credit and reuerence in lower places.

Vers. 25. *Heauinesse in the heart of a man doth bring it downe: but a good word reioyceth it.*

HEAUINESSE *of heart*, that is, such sorrowes or feares as are not godly, and effects of faith, but proceeding from infidelitie, or carnall respects, especially being excessiue, doth bring downe the heart, not humbling it kindly, so as pride may

may be taken away, but either filling it with diſcouragement, or diſtemper, againſt which the Prophet wreſtled with ſundry conflicts: *Why art thou caſt downe my ſoule, and art vnquiet, or tumultuous within me.* Pſal. 42. 5. Now withall hee preſcribeth the remedie whereby this diſeaſe of hurtfull ſorrow and penſiueneſſe may bee cured, and that is with good words. For the comfortable ſpeech of a friend, but eſpecially the wholeſome word of God, declaring the remiſſion of ſins, and the fauour of God, expelleth the heauineſſe of the heart, and and refreſheth it with ioy and comfort.

Verſ. 26. *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour, but the way of the wicked will deceiue them.*

THE *righteous*, that is, euery godly man who hath attained to vprightneſſe, though not to perfection of righteouſneſſe, *is better then his neighbour*, is better beloued and graced of God, and more eſteemed of godly wiſe men, and hath that in him which maketh him more commendable then any other that is vnrighteous and ſinfull: and ſo his way is anſwerable to his hope. But the wicked deſiring, and ſeeking, and expecting an excellencie aboue others, are notwithſtanding contemptible, and grow in time to bee contemned, and ſo their way deceiueth them.

Verſ. 27. *The deceitfull man roſteth not that which he tooke in hunting: but the riches of the diligent man are pretious.*

THE *deceitfull*, &c. That is a prouerbiall kind of ſpeech, ſignifying that they ſhall not enioy nor haue the benefit of that which they get by craft and falſhood. If the whole ſimilitude be fully ſet downe, the meaning will the better appeare. Euen as hunters many times when they take a prey, yet taſt not of it, nor fare the better for it; (for dogs may eate it vp, or ſome other occurrent may fall out to deprriue them of it, as many lets come betweene the mouth and the morſell) ſo vniuſt and deceitfull men, though they attaine to wealth and riches,

riches, may bee assured that they shall neuer haue any sound profit or comfort by them. Where by the way may bee seen the different end of the hunting that was vsed in those daies, and of this which is practised of many in our times. They made it an exercise for profit, and thereby as it may appeare, prouided food for themselues, and the families wherein they liued, as is to be seene in the example of *Esau* himselfe, who vsed to bring home venison to his father. But it is ordinary now with diuers to bestow a great part of their time to hunt meerely for pleasure, without any commodity. They voluntarily defraud themselues of the prey which they take, their households haue not the better cheere by their hunting, but the worse. They consume themselues, and wast their goods, and impouerish their wiues and children, by following their sports, and neglecting their estate: by feeding so many dogs, as that thereby they faile both of care and ability to prouide for their people. *But the riches of the diligent are pretious:* that is, those things which they that are both faithfull and industrious doe gaine and get by lawfull meanes, shall doe them good, and serue for their comfort.

Vers. 28. *Life is in the way of righteousnes, and in that pathway there is no death.*

Life, &c. The meaning is, that they which are righteous mẽ iustified by the merits of Christ, & sanctified by his spirit, & obediẽt to his wil in working that which is agreeable to his word, are in state of life euerlasting. The life of grace they haue possession of already; the life of glory is assured to them by the life of grace: whosoeuer hath the one, can neuer faile of the other. And therefore it is said that there is no death in that part. They are deliuered frõ the first death, which hath power ouer all sinful men in this world: and they shal neuer come into the second, which is the portiõ of reprobates in ỹ wotld to come. And this is confirmed by the testimony of Christ himself, saying, *Verily, verily, I say vnto you, he that heareth my word, and beleeueth in him that sent me, hath euerlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life.*

Chap.

CHAPTER. XIII.

Vers. 1. *A wise sonne hearkeneth to the instruction of his father: but a scorner will heare no rebuke.*

A *Wise sonne*, that is, a godly and prudent child of either sex; male, or female, sonne, or daughter, will receiue, obserue and obey the good lessons and counsell both of father and mother. *But a scorner*, that is, an obstinate sinfull person, *will heare no rebuke*: that is, he will bee so farre from profiting by the reproofes of any, though he be a friend, though a brother, though a most tender father, that he will not so much as brooke or beare it, without contempt at the least, of the partie which rebuketh him; little regardeth he who admonisheth him, though hee haue neuer so great authority: or of what faults, though they be neuer so manifest, or hainous, or dangerous; or with what mind, though out of greatest loue, and for his greatest good: or in what manner, though most mildly, and with all lenity and kindnesse.

Vers. 2. *A good man shall eate the fruit of his mouth: but the soule of the transgressors, violence.*

THe meaning of the first part of this verse is, that godly men shall be blessed, both for, and by their gratious, wise, and seasonable speeches: and consequently for their religious and righteous behauiour; and to this in the other part is opposed the condition of the godlesse: that their soules, that is, themselues, at least in their soules, shall bee requited with violence for their cruelty, and other euill deeds which they haue done: and consequently for their wicked words which they haue spoken. So it is all one in sense with the fourteenth verse of the twelfth Chapter, where it is said, that *a man shall be satiate*

ciate with good things by the fruit of his mouth; and the recompence of a mans hands, shall God giue vnto him.

Vers. 3. *He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life: but destruction shall be vnto him that openeth his lips wide.*

HE *that keepeth his mouth*] Which is considerate and warie in his words, neuer speaking but when he ought, nor vttering any thing but which is true and conuenient; *he keepeth his life*, prouided for his safety, peace and quietnesse. *But he that openeth his lips*, or strideth too wide to leaud speaking (for so the word signifieth) as a harlot prostitutes her selfe, or spreadeth her body to filthy companions, Ezech. 16. 25. *destruction shall be to him*: he is like to meet with much trouble, and at one time or other, to be quite ouerthrowne and come to vtter ruine, as a thing broken to peeces and made good for nothing.

Vers. 4. *The sluggard lusteth, but his soule hath nought: but the soule of the diligent shall be made fat.*

THe *sluggard lusteth*] That is, negligent and idle persons haue strong affections to riches and credit, and all things which are in request & estimation, *but his soule hath nought*, they goe without that which they long for, their wishes get no wealth, they faile of their desires, through the want of constant endeauours to effect them. *But the soule of the diligent shall be made fat*, that is, the industrious persons themselues which painfully labour in some honest vocation, shall all bee competently prouided for, and many of them diuers times shall attaine to plentie and abundance. For soule in the Scriptures is often taken for the whole man, and fatnesse for a good estate and prosperity.

Vers. 5. *A righteous man hateth a false matter: but it causeth the wicked to stinke, and be ashamed.*

THe meaning is, that all that are truly iust and godly, will decline from bad causes, words and deeds, with hatred thereof,

thereof, ſo farre as they appeare vnto them to bee vnlawfull. At leaſt it is the dutie of all good men ſo to doe, though ſometimes peraduenture they faile in practiſe. But contrariwiſe the wicked doe not ſo, but take pleaſure in ſinfulneſſe, and thereby are brought to diſgrace and reproch, eſpecially in the ſight of God and good men, and oft alſo ordinarie men, ſuch as are meerely ciuill, yea vngodly men and ſinners doe loathe them, and ſpeake euill of them for their leaudneſſe. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: The righteous hateth a falſe matter, and therfore gaineth reuerence and honour: but the wicked loueth a falſe matter, and therefore is made odious and ſhamefull.

Verſ. 6. *Righteouſneſſe preſerueth him that is vpright in his way: but wickedneſſe ouerthroweth the ſinner.*

RIghteouſneſſe, &c.] That is, Gods fauour, grace & goodneſſe for righteouſneſſe, and by it doth protect both the bodies and ſoules of ſuch as are of a ſincere heart, and holy behauiour. *And wickedneſſe ouerthroweth the ſinner*, or man *of ſinne*, as it is in the original text, it is alwaies a cauſe by deſert, and many times a meanes by occaſion to draw downe miſery and deſtruction vpon him. For the Lord doth deale with men according to their waies, eſtabliſhing the iuſt and righteous, and caſting downe into miſerie ſuch as bee ſtubborne and rebellious, according to the ſaying of the Prophet: With the merciſull thou wilt ſhew thy ſelfe merciſull, with an vpright man thou wilt ſhew thy ſelfe vpright, with the pure thou wilt ſhew thy ſelfe pure, and with the froward thou wilt wraſtle. Pſal. 18. 25, 26.

Verſ. 7. *There is that maketh himſelfe rich, and hath nothing: and that maketh himſelfe poore hauing great riches.*

THere is, &c.] That is to ſay, diuers men take diuers vnlawfull courſes concerning their eſtate. *Some boaſt themſelues to be rich, when they haue nothing*: being poore and in debt, they make ſhew of great wealth, by keeping a great port. Others, *faine themſelues poore, when they haue great ſubſtance,*

ſtance, they complaine of want, and goe barely, and fare hard, and would make the world beleeue that they are nothing worth at all.

Verſ.8. *The riches of a man are the ranſome of his life: but the poore heareth not the rebuke.*

THe meaning of theſe words ſeemeth to be, that howſoeuer there is in diuers reſpects very good vſe of wealth and riches, yet many times they bring danger to the owners thereof, who are driuen to depart with them for the preſeruation of their liues. And though pouerty bee not without ſundrie inconueniences, yet poore men are more free from the contentions of enuious perſons then thoſe of higher place and degree. Notwithſtanding, it commeth not to paſſe alwaies neceſſarily, that euery rich man is brought into ſuch trouble, nor that euery poore man eſcapeth from all rebukes and moleſtations, but he ſpeaketh of that which oft befalleth the one, and ſeldome the other, eſpecially in regard of his eſtate.

Verſ. 9. *The light of the righteous ſhall reioyce: but the candle of the wicked ſhall be put out.*

THe light of the righteous] That is, the good eſtate & proſperity of godly men, *reioyceth*, is ſtable & encreaſing: as it is ſaid of the ſun, from whence the ſimilitude is taken, that he *reioyceth like a mighty man, to run his courſe*. And likewiſe here is ioy aſcribed to it in reſpect of the effect, for that it maketh righteous mē not without due cauſe to be ioyful. *But the candle of the wicked*, their wealth, credit, dignities & pleaſures, or whatſoeuer fleſhly men haue in admiration, or delight in, are but like to a candle light in compariſon of ſun-ſhine, & *ſhal be put out*: euen ſuddenly bee taken from them, or by degrees, in continuance of time conſume away, & vaniſh to nothing. The oppoſition ſtandeth in this manner: The light of the righteous endureth for euer, and therefore is full of ioy: but the candle of the wicked will ſoone be put out, & therfore is full of ſorrow.

Verſ. 10.

Verſe 10. *Through meere pride doth man make contentions; but with the well aduiſed is wiſedome.*

ONly *by pride*] That is, whereſoeuer ſtrife groweth, there is pride, at leaſt in one of the parties contending: if not on both ſides. Sometimes it ſtirreth vp men, and imboldneth them to offer wrongs: ſometimes imbittereth men; and maketh them wayward againſt the right: ſometimes it cauſeth the one to be careleſſe of dealing according to equitie, and the other to be impatient of bearing any iniuries. Yet notwithſtanding this condemneth not all kinde of contending, but the frowardnes of the faultie perſons in it. It is lawfull to giue a rebuke and correction, if it be done vpon good grounds, with an vpright heart, and in due manner, though it be the occaſion of ſome iarre or debate, and hee onely is to be blamed, which receiueth not the admonition. And ſo to ſtand in the cauſe of God is commendable, (for the Prophet reproueth them that *contend not for the truth*) and they are to bee charged with the ſinne of contention, which oppoſe themſelues againſt good cauſes. Neither are ſuch here to be taxed as defend their ſtate, or by the helpe of the Magiſtrate and lawes, againſt thoſe which goe about to defraud or defame them. Neither yet are they to be reproued by this, that follow ſuites againſt malefactors to bring them to iuſt puniſhment. Prouided alwaies, that in theſe caſes the cauſe be waightie, their proceedings equall, and their hearts free from all malice and reuenge. *But with the well aduiſed is wiſedome*, they which haue diſcretion and iudgement in themſelues, or bee willing to hearken to aduice and counſell of others, will beware of vnneceſſarie controuerſies. The oppoſition is this: Onely by pride and follie doth men make contentions: but with the well aduiſed is wiſedome and humilitie to follow peace. Eſai. 59. 4

Verſe 11. *The riches of vanitie ſhall diminiſh: but he that gathereth with the hand ſhall increaſe them.*

GOods ill gotten, and wealth attained vnto by vnlawfull meanes, ſhall not proſper, but either waxe leſſe and leſſe,

or perish together on a sudden, or at least depart from the vniust owner, and become another mans: but hee that vseth honest labour and diligence, doth take the right way to thriue, and daily to grow richer. Falsehood, and iniustice, vsurie, and other such like noysome courses, are commonly preferred before the best and most profitable vocations, as seeming to promise the greatest commodities; and manuall trades are out of request, for that they require paines, without likelihood of any ample recompence; but Gods curse pursueth, and at last ouertaketh those deceitfull people, and euill workers, and either strippeth them of their liues, or of their substance, according to the threate: As the Partridge sitteth on egges, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leaue them in the middest of his daies, and at his end shall be a foole. And his blessing so prospereth those his diligent seruants, that their wages and estate is augmented much aboue that which was expected.

Vers. 12. *The hope that is deferred, maketh the heart sicke: but when a desire commeth, it is a tree of life.*

THE *hope deferred*] That is, whē the thing hoped for, is not obtained according to his expectation that hoped for it, but is put off from one time to another, it bringeth great griefe and affliction: *but when the desire commeth*, when a man hath that which hee long wished for, *it is a tree of life*, that is, very pleasant and comfortable, and healeth the spirits which were weakned by the former delay: especially, if the prayer of faith haue preuailed with God to obtaine the gift as a pledge of his fauour, as *Abrahams* did for *Isaac*, and *Isaacs* did for his sons, and that of *Hannah* for *Samuel*.

Verse 13. *Hee that despiseth the word, hee shall be destroyed, but he that feareth the commandements, he shall be rewarded.*

HE *that despiseth the word, &c.*] That is, euery one is in a dangerous case, and at least certaine to perish in the end, who

who contemptuouſly reiecteth the holy Scriptures: which becauſe the Lord doth as it were ſpeake in them, and declare his will by them, are called his word: and that for the perfect agreement and conſent of all the parts, is ſet downe in the ſingular number, as if it were but one. Neither is this puniſhment threatned only to the contemners of the bookes, and ſentences, and texts of the Scriptures, but likewiſe to the deſpiſers of the miniſterie thereof. *But he that feareth the commandement*, which reuerenceth, and loueth, and maketh conſcience of the whole doctrine of God, *hee ſhall bee rewarded* with peace, and bleſſings of this life, and glorie and bleſſednes in that which is to come.

Verſe 14. *The doctrine of a wiſe man is a welſpring of life, to depart from the ſnares of death.*

THough the meaning of theſe words hath been ſhewed, and proſecuted alreadie in the eleuenth verſe of the tenth chapter, yet we will adde ſomewhat to the explication thereof. When it is ſaid therefore that the doctrine or inſtruction of a wiſe man is of ſuch force, it is to be vnderſtood of wholeſome and ſound doctrine, ſuch as he receiueth from God, and deliuereth to his brethren; for wiſe men ſometimes draw their inſtructions from their errors, and now and then from groſſer corruptions: as *Dauid* did, when hee gaue direction to *Ioab*, how he ſhould cauſe *Vrijah* to be made away. And as the leſſon ought to be ſound for the matter; ſo muſt it be reaſonable for the manner: as ſpoken in due time; in meete place; and fitly applied: wherein *Ioabs* friends much failed, though otherwiſe the men were godly, and their words very true and waightie. And yet further to theſe muſt be added of his part, that will drink of this liuely fountaine; an attentiue eare, and beleeuing heart to heare and embrace the doctrine. And then it will be conſtant, and not dried vp like ditches or ponds, that are fed with raine water: it will be comfortable, and refreſh the hearts of them that are in affliction: it will be profitable, and make them that receiue it, fruitfull: it will be neceſſarie

and forcible to deliuer them from ſin and deſtruction, though therein the ſimilitude be altered: for that is meant by turning from the ſnares of death.

Verſ. 15. *Grace gineth good ſucceſſe: but the way of the tranſgreſſors is rough.*

GRace] That is, the worke of Gods holy ſpirit, begetting pietie and righteouſnes, *doth giue good ſucceſſe:* it maketh good men to deale wiſely and proſperouſly in all their affaires. *But the way of the tranſgreſſors is rough.* Their life is vnhappie and full of many vexations. The ſenſe and oppoſition ſtandeth thus: Grace giueth good ſucceſſe, and therefore the way of the obedient is plaine and comfortable; and ſinfulnes bringeth euill ſucceſſe, and therefore the way of the diſobedient is rough and troubleſome.

Verſe 16. *Euery wiſe man worketh by knowledge: but a foole laieth open his follie.*

EVery wiſe man] Whoſoeuer is prudent, *worketh by knowledge:* enterpriſeth and manageth his affaires diſcreetly and with iudgement: and ſo declareth his vnderſtanding. On the contrary ſide, he that is vndiſcreete and fooliſh, goeth raſhly and rawly about his buſineſſe, and ſo bewrayeth openly, and publiſheth abroad his ignorance and fooliſhnes. So both ſorts make manifeſt what they are, and what is in them, by the conſtant courſe of their waies, and proceedings, and not by ſome one action, or a few workes. Although wiſedome be neuer deceiued in any matter, yet wiſe men are ſometimes, and both faile, and fault as well in that which they doe, as in the words which they ſpeake, as the blemiſhes of *Dauid*, *Salomon*, and many holy men recorded in the Scriptures doe ſhew. And ſome things the wickedſt ſinners haue well acted touching the matter, and externall circumſtances, but neither with a good conſcience, nor conſtancie.

Verſe

Verſ. 17. *A wicked meſſenger falleth into euill, but a faithfull ambaſſadour healeth.*

A *Wicked meſſenger*] Or ſeruant, which either vndertaketh vnlawfull errands, or ſeruices, as *Rabſhakeh* did, when he was ſent by his maſter to blaſpheme and defie the Lord and his Church; or dealeth vntruſtily with them that vſe him in a lawfull buſineſſe, or is iniurious to them to whom he is ſent, either by concealing any thing from which were fit for them to heare, or adding any thing which were meet to be ſuppreſſed, or doing his meſſage in vndecent manner, or returning an anſwere ſo as may turne to their hurt: hee ſhall *fall into euill:* Gods heauie hand and iudgements by one meanes or other, ſhall ſooner or later, light vpon him, as the two churliſh and imperious captaines found with their fifties, which were ſent for *Eliyah.* But *a faithfull ambaſſadour* or meſſenger, he that faithfully performeth his charge, whether publike or priuate, *doth heale*, is a meanes and inſtrument of good to his maſter, whoſe minde he freeth from feares and griefes, and ſo healeth the maladies thereof, as a Phyſitian cureth the diſeaſes of the body. He is alſo helpfull to them, to whom he is ſent, by deliuering comforts comfortably, and lenifying that which is harſh and ſharpe, and mending that which is amiſſe, and by loue and diſcretion pacifying contentions, and furthering peace; whereupon by conſequence he alſo procureth his own comfort. So ſtandeth the oppoſition: A wicked vnfaithfull meſſenger hurteth, and therefore ſhall fall into euill: but a godly faithfull meſſenger healeth, and therefore ſhall receiue good.

Verſ. 18. *Pouertie and ſhame ſhall be to him that refuſeth inſtruction: but he that regardeth correction ſhall be honoured.*

P*Ouertie, &c.*] Euery one that reiecteth knowledge, or the meanes whereby it is to be obtained, ſhall either faile to get wealth, or not long keep it, or haue it and hold it in iudge-

ment, without the vse and comfort. And as he shall be needy, so shall he also be base, *shame* shall come vpon him, and couer him. Some are made contemptible and vile by pouertie and want, and some by the filthinesse of their sinnes, though they abound with wealth. They may haue riches, but not honour: they may haue cap and curtesie, but not reuerence and estimation. *But he that regardeth correction:* which hearkeneth and yeeldeth obedience to wholesome counsell, and profiteth by chastisements, *shall be honoured:* shall either attaine to riches and preferment: or be of good account, and well thought of (especially among the wise & godly) in a meaner conditiō.

Verse 19. *A desire when it commeth is pleasant to the soule: but it is abomination to fooles, to depart from euill.*

THis sentence dependeth vpō the verse afore going, where the promise in the latter clause of that, is amplified by the effect in the former of this: for there it is said, that *he which regardeth correction* shall be honoured; and here it is added, that when such a desirable gift is bestowed, he shall haue ioy with his honour, which obtaineth it. And the threatning in the former clause of that, is aggrauated by the cause in the latter of this: for there it is said, that pouertie and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction; and here it is proued to be iust and equall, that it should be so, because he is wholly deuouted and giuen ouer to wickednes. The coherence and agreement of one part with the other will be the more euident, if that be supplied which is vnderstood in both. It is abomination to wise men to continue in euill, and therefore the desire accomplished will delight their soule: and it is abomination to fooles to depart from euill, and therefore the punishment inflicted will torment their soules.

Verse 20. *Hee that walketh with the wise, shall be the wiser, but he that vseth the companie of fooles, shall be the worse.*

BY walking here with the wise, is meant the society & conuersation with wise men, & that is a meanes of knowledge and

and vertuous behauiour to them that haue, and vſe the opportunitie of it, and ſo thereby they are made the better: wheras on the other ſide, they that aſſociate themſelues with ſinfull fooles, and ioyne in fellowſhip with the wicked, are more corrupted with ſinne and follie, and ſo become the worſe. For great is the force of company and example, of daily parle and conference. The words of good men are medicinable againſt vices, and their piety, ſobriety, patience, humility, loue, kindneſſe, and other vertues are a ſhining light to ſhew their aſſociates the way to all goodneſſe, and as a guide to conduct them therein: and the mouth of ſinners doth breathe out poyſon and infection, and all their waies no leſſe contagious to ſuch as adioyne themſelus vnto them, then the leproſie or peſtilence.

Verſ. 21. *Euill purſueth ſinners: but that which is good rewardeth the iuſt.*

BY *euill*, is meant the puniſhment of ſin which is reſembled to the rauenous, ſtrong, and ſwift kind of creatures, and wicked men, to them that are weaker, and ſlower, and ſo chaſed by them, and made their prey. Now as affliction and miſery will in this manner come vpon the vngodly, as the wages of their rebellion, ſo bleſſings and comfort ſhall come to the vngodly, as a recompence of their obedience. So that both good and bad are followed, and ſhall ſurely bee ouertaken, the one with plagues, and the other with mercies; and neither ſort knowne how many they are, or of what kinds, or when they will come, or where they ſhall find them: but the wicked may iuſtly dread the worſt to bee puniſhed by them, when they ſhall be moſt burthenous vnto them, and the godly may looke for the beſt, to bee bleſſed therewith in the fitteſt ſeaſon. For ſo we reade in another place: *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke: but he that ſoweth righteouſneſſe ſhall receiue a ſure reward. So righteouſneſſe leadeth to life, and hee that followeth euill, ſeeketh his owne death.* Pro. 11. 18. 19.

Verſ. 22. *A good man ſhall leaue inheritances to his childrens children: but the riches of the ſinner is laid vp for the iuſt.*

THe meaning is, that the godly perſon not onely himſelfe enioyeth his goods whileſt he liueth: but when he dieth, leaueth the ſame to his children; in ſuch ſort, as that alſo their children through Gods mercy inherit the ſame. Againe, the wicked man is ſo farre off from leauing his goods to his poſterity, as that by Gods prouidence they oftentimes are rolled from him vpon the righteous perſon; who is as it were his heire againſt his will. Yet this is not ſo to be taken, as though it held vniuerſally & perpetually in euery perſon. Many good men haue no children at all; many good men haue no children ſuruiuing them: many good mens poſterity endeth in their immediate iſſue: many good men leaue their children poore & in meane eſtate. So on the contrary ſide, diuers wicked men leaue their lands and riches to their owne children, though impious alſo like their parents: and they conuey them to their ſeed after them, which in like manner poſſeſſe them; as the Prophet ſaith in the Pſalm. *Thou filleſt their bellies with thine hid treaſure: their children haue enough, and leaue the reſt of their ſubſtance for their children.* But he ſpeaketh of that which commeth often to paſſe, though not alwaies, and which are the readieſt meanes for ſuch effects. Hee that would prouide well for his poſterity, cannot find out any way ſo good for his childrens eſtate, as to bee godly himſelfe. And if the Lord withhold that bleſſing from him, hee may recompence it by making his children inheritors of grace and ſaluation: and if either hee giue him no children, or children of no piety and goodneſſe, hee will vndoubtedly counteruaile it with encreaſe of heauenly gifts and glory for his owne ſoule. And he that giueth himſelfe to iniquitie and ſin, doth as much as in him lieth, to ſubuert both his eſtate and familie: and if that both ſtand, notwithſtanding the courſe hee taketh, to bring them to ruine, then as *Dauid* ſaid in the forecited Pſal. his *portion* is onely *in this life*, and his puniſhment reſerued to be the larger in the world to come.

Verſ. 23.

Verſ. 23. *Much food is by tillage for the poore: but ſome are conſumed by indiſcretion.*

BY *food*, he meaneth all ſuch things as are needfull for the vſe of mans life; and by *much*, he vnderſtandeth a fit and competent meaſure; which diuers times groweth to be large and ample. And this doe poore men often attaine vnto, when they are prouident, and diligent in managing their affaires; and by name in the worke of husbandrie: and ſo it holdeth in all other honeſt and lawfull vocations. Now againe on the contrary ſide: *ſome are conſumed by indiſcretion.* For many a one who hath a good ſtocke, and faire liuings, and fruitfull grounds, by neglecting labour, and not ordering things aright, waſteth all that he hath, and falleth into great want and neceſſity. His follie, his ſinne, his riot and rechleſneſſe brings him to the ground how high ſoeuer he grew. They are like to the axe ſtriking at the root of a tree, which the talleſt top, or moſt ſpreading branches are not able to defend, but muſt fall downe themſelues and be broken.

Verſ. 24. *He that ſpareth his rod, hateth his ſonne: but hee that loueth him, chaſteneth him betime.*

HE *that ſpareth his rod*] Which withholdeth due correction from his child when it is needfull, *hateth his ſon*, becommeth his enemie, though not in affection, yet in effect by omitting a dutie ſo neceſſarie for his welfare. *But hee that loueth him* vnfainedly, with a ſound affection, and the loue of a godly father, *correcteth him betime.* The words in the Originall tongue are of great force: for this *betime*, which ſeemeth to be an aduerbe, is there a verbe, and ſignifieth to riſe timely in the morning; and diligently to ſeeke: ſo that it ſignifieth as well the due care which good parents haue for the nurturing of their children, as their prouidence to do it in good ſeaſon, whiles they bee tender and young, before they grow to ſtrength and ſtomacke, and ſo either vtterly refuſe, or little regard *Shicharo.*

gard all fatherly correction. And that which we translate correction, doth also signifie instruction: so that the sentence may thus be well englished: *He that loueth him hasteneth chastisement, and instruction to him.* And those are meet to be ioyned together, sometimes stripes with admonitions, and alwaies admonitions with stripes. For the smart of the flesh, and the paine of the body will bring small profit to the soule, vnlesse they heare their fault declared, and haue direction how to reforme it.

Musar.

Vers. 25. *The righteous eateth to the contentation of his mind: but the bellie of the wicked shall want.*

THe righteous] All those which are religious in heart, and vpright in their waies, eate, that is, enioy all good things, as they shall not be starued through want of food, so they shal not be destitute of clothing, or lodging, or habitation, or any other thing that is needful for them: either they shall abound with plentie, or be prouided of that which is sufficient. Sometimes they haue no great store for their eyes to looke vpon, yet liuing by faith and not by sight, they haue alwaies enough for their soules to be satisfied with. *But the bellie of the wicked shall want*, and their backes also very often and according to the course of the law, many of them liue in *hunger, and in thirst, and in nakednesse, and in need of all things.* And albeit this iudgement is not executed vpon them all, yet commonly some other more heauie and hurtfull is inflicted vpon them that escape it. And of neither of them which get most, nor of them which fare best, it can be truly affirmed, that they eate to the contentation of their minds: for though they haue much wealth in their hands, and much meate at their tables, and much wine in the bowles, yet they haue not much, nor any contentment in their hearts, for they remaine vnsatiable.

Deut. 28. 48.

CHAP.

CHAPTER. XIIII.

Verſ. 1. *A wiſe woman buildeth her houſe: but the fooliſh deſtroyeth it with her owne hands.*

Wiſe woman] Such a one as is both godly and diſcreet, *buildeth her houſe*, is helpfull and profitable, to the ſtate and familie of her husband, and her owne. *But ſhe that is fooliſh*, being deſtitute of grace and good prouidence, how much wit ſoeuer ſhe hath: for many times the moſt wittie wiues, are the leaſt thriftie huſwiues, *deſtroyeth it*, vndoeth her husband, her ſelfe and children, and ouerthroweth the whole houſhold, either by her pride, and immoderate expenſes to maintaine that, or by her luxurie and ſweet tooth, or by her goſſiping, and company keeping, or by her ſlothfulneſſe and idle behauiour, neither getting, nor keeping, nor ouerſeeing her people, nor any way beſteeding her husband with helpe.

Verſ. 2. *Hee that walketh in his vprightneſſe feareth the Lord: but he that is lewd in his waies, deſpiſeth him.*

BY *walking, and waies*, is meant in the Scriptures, the ordinarie, vſuall, and common courſe of mens behauiour: and by *vprightneſſe*, the ſincerity and faithfulneſſe of their hearts, contrary to fraud and guile, which pretendeth one thing, and purpoſeth another, in them which make a ſhew to doe ſeruice to God, in that wherein they only or principally purpoſe ſome carnall end to themſelues: and by *fearing the Lord*, is vnderſtood true piety and godlineſſe. So that the ſenſe of the former clauſe is, that euery one which accuſtometh himſelfe to well doing, vnfainedly, without hypocriſie and halting, is vndoubtedly the child of God, and truly religious. *But he that is lewd in his waies*, that leadeth a wicked life, whether openly in the

the ſight and view of the world, or ſecretly, ſo as is knowne only to the Lord, and his owne conſcience, *deſpiſeth him*, doth actually, and indeed ſhew contempt to God by violating his lawes, howſoeuer he may beare himſelfe in hand, and make others to beleeue that he doth much reuerence him.

Verſe. 3 *In the mouth of the fooliſh is the rod*, or wand *of pride: but the lips of the wiſe preſerue them.*

IN the mouth of the fooliſh, in the vſuall talke of wicked men, eſpecially when they are of an hautie heart and high minded, *is the rod of pride:* ſuch ſpeeches as proceed from pride, and whereby they ſtrike at others, and are commonly ſmitten themſelues: either man taking aduantage of them, or God inflicting puniſhments for them. *But the lips of the wiſe:* ſuch words and anſweres as in humilitie they vtter to men: and ſuch praiers and petitions as they ſend vp to God, *preſerue them*, protect themſelues, and others alſo from hurts and dangers.

Verſ. 4. *Where none oxen are, the crib is empty: but much encreaſe commeth by the ſtrength of the oxe.*

BY *oxen*, he meaneth thoſe kind of labouring cattell, which are applied to plowing, and other workes of husbandrie; and where they are not, or not ſet to worke; there *the crib is emptie*, and ſo is the barne alſo, food for man and beaſt faileth: *but much encreaſe commeth by the ſtrength of the oxe:* abundance of corne, and neceſſarie prouiſion, ariſeth by the trauell of cattell, and labourers, in diligent plowing and husbandrie. For therein the worke of the beaſts, the induſtrie of men, the vertue of the earth, the multiplication of graine, doe all concurre together with the bleſſing of God vpon them.

Verſ. 5. *A faithfull witneſſe will not lie: but he that telleth lies, will be a falſe witneſſe.*

A Faithfull witneſſe] He that maketh conſcience, and is reſolued before the iudgement ſeat conſtantly to teſtifie the

the truth, will not vſually, nor in his common ſpeech tell vntruthes; *but he that telleth lies will be a falſe witneſſe*: whoſoeuer accuſtometh himſelfe to lying in priuate, will not ſticke to forſweare himſelfe, and beare falſe witneſſe in publike. For the feare of God is of no force with him to deterre him from it; and falſhood hee loueth, and truth he hateth; and therefore will be as froward to promote the one, and to oppoſe the other, if they may doe it with impunitie.

Verſ. 6. *The ſcorner ſeeketh wiſedome but findeth it not: but knowledge is eaſie to him that is prudent.*

THe ſcorner] That is, very ſinful & contemptuous perſons; (for it is a collectiue, and meant of all: or at leaſt of diuers of them) *ſeeketh wiſedome*: by wiſedome we may vnderſtand the true knowledge of Gods holy will; and where it is ſaid the ſcorners ſeeke it: the meaning is that ſome of them make ſhew of ſeeking, and ſeeme ſo to doe, being preſent at thoſe meanes, and outwardly dealing in thoſe exerciſes, whereby others truly ſeeke, and effectually find knowledge. And as theſe vſe the meanes without any deſire of hauing wiſedome, ſo others would haue it: but contemne al thoſe means whereby it is offered, and to be receiued, truſting to their owne wit and carnall reaſon. And a third ſort ſeeke it, and are willing to haue it, and at the Miniſters hands would gladly obtaine it; but only vpon their death-beds, or in great extremities, not in loue to God, or ſincere affection to his word, or in holy liking of his graces, but only in terrour and paſſion, that they might eſcape hell and damnation; or the preſent dangers wherein they ſtand. Hereof the Prophet ſpeaketh in the Pſalme, ſaying; *When he ſlew them, they ſought him, and they returned & ſought God early. But they flattered him with their mouth; and diſſembled with him with their tongue. For their heart was not vpright with him, neither were they faithfull in his couenant.* Pſal. 78. 34. 36. And therfore being ſo affected, it is not ſtrange that their ſucceſſe is no better. For though our Sauiour ſaith, that *euery one which ſeeketh findeth*, Matth. 7. 8. yet it is to be vnderſtood of euery ſuch one as ſeeketh

keth faithfully, and in due manner. But knowledge is easie to him that is prudent. We must not so conceiue of these words, as though men of vnderstanding could encrease their wisedome and graces, without industrie and paines taking: but that when they haue vsed diligence in the exercise of Gods ordinances, they may know for certainty that they shall speed well, and be stored with all such graces as will leade them to life euerlasting. And therefore wee see the sense of this sentence expressed in the second chapter of this booke. *If thou*

Prou. 2. 3. 4. 5. *calleſt after knowledge, and cryeſt for vnderſtanding: if thou ſeekeſt her as ſiluer, and ſearcheſt for her as for treaſures: then ſhalt thou vnderſtand the feare of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.*

Verſ. 7. *Depart from the preſence of the fooliſh man, and* from him whom *thou knoweſt not* to haue *the lips of knowledge.*

DEpart, &c. Breake off society and fellowship with the vngodly person, be not familiar with him. Not that it is altogether vnlawfull to haue any dealing with the wicked in common duties, but to be ioyned too neere vnto them. Wee are not simply forbidden to buy or sell, or to eate or drinke with them sometimes, when vpon due occasions we are called thereunto; so that wee willingly make not choyce of their companie: but to ioyne in marriage with them, to make them priuie to our counsell, or to vse them as inward and speciall friends, this is here forbidden, and this is vnlawfull. *And* from him whom *thou perceiueſt not* to haue *the lips* of knowledge, that is, separate thy selfe, and conuerse not, especially conferre not with such as from their ignorant mindes vse to talke ignorantly with their tongues. And yet his meaning is not that wee should forbeare all speech with them that want knowledge; or speake not according to knowledge: for they haue most need to be instructed: but hee doth admonish vs to beware both of them that breathe out pestilent and contagious words to peruert others, and resist the truth contentiously, and will neuer bee brought to see their owne ignorance and errour.

Verſ.

Verſe 8. *The wiſedome of the prudent is to vnderſtand his way: but the fooliſhnes of fooles is deceit.*

THe *wiſedome of the prudent*] That knowledge and vnderſtanding which any man hath that is truly wiſe, *is to vnderſtand his way*, is giuen of God, and vſed of him for the direction, and guidance of his heart and behauiour. *But the fooliſhnes of fooles*, all the wit and skill that is in the wicked: (for howſoeuer that carrieth a ſhew of wiſdome, yet the ſubſtance of it is follie, and though fooliſh men vſe to call them wiſe, yet the wiſe God calleth them fooles) *is deceit*, whereby themſelues are beguiled both in opinion of that they are, and in expectation of that which they hope for: and whereby they beguile others alſo, either in their ſoules, or in outward matters.

Verſe 9. *Sinne maketh fooles to agree: but among the righteous, that which is acceptable maketh agreement.*

ONe wicked man loueth another for his ſinnes ſake, and is the more willing and deſirous of his companie for his lewd conditions. The word which wee tranſlate *making to agree*, doth ſignifie to doe the part of an Interpretour betweene men of different languages, by whoſe meanes they mutually vnderſtand each others words, and of an ambaſſador between Princes ſent either for the making of a league, or for the confirmation of loue betweene them: and the meſſengers which *Baradoch Baladan* the King of Babel ſent to *Ezechiah* are ſo called, 2. Chron. 32. 31. *But among the righteous that which is acceptable, &c.* The meaning is, that goodneſſe, euen ſuch as is approued of God, and pleaſing to good men, doth vnite the mindes of thoſe which are godly, and maketh them louing and kinde euery one to other. This cauſed *Ionathan* ſo earneſtly to ſet his affection vpon *Dauid*, and to haue him in ſuch eſtimation, becauſe he ſaw him to be full of grace, and valour, as himſelfe was alſo. And this cauſed *Dauid* likewiſe ſo gladly to entertaine the loue of *Ionathan*, with conſtant care to requite *Ialits.*

quite the ſame vnto him, and his poſteritie. What made the league betweene them ſo firme, and the bond of amitie ſo ſtable, but this that they were both godly, both wiſe, both valiant, both reſolute againſt Gods and the Churches enemies, the Philiſtims?

Verſe 10. *The heart knoweth the bitterneſſe of his ſoule, and a ſtranger ſhall not meddle with his ioy.*

THE *heart of a man*] That part of him which is the fountaine of life, and ſeate of affections, *knoweth the bitternes of his ſoule*, feeleth inward anguiſh, and hath experience of pearcing ſorrowes: the meaning is that the feares and heart griefe of them that haue a troubled conſcience, are more felt of themſelues, then knowne to others. *And a ſtranger*, any other beſides himſelfe, *ſhall not meddle with his ioy*: cannot diſcerne how great his comfort is, being the ſame that S. *Peter* calleth, *an vnſpeakable ioy*. No griefe is ſo great, as that which lieth vpon an afflicted conſcience: much leſſe may a ſleepie conſcience (which neuer yet apprehended the hideouſnes of ſinne, the heate and flame of Gods indignation, and the inſufferable torments of damnation) be able to conceiue what a heauie burthen an afflicted ſoule doth goe vnder: neither is it poſſible for him (whoſe heart the Lord hath not refreſhed with the remiſſion of ſinnes, and the ſight of his gracious preſence, and the fruition of Chriſt, and the aſſured hope of eternall happineſſe) to comprehend what admirable conſolations he that is ſoundly humbled, doth enioy after his anguiſh and terrors.

1. Pet. 1. 8.

Verſe 11. *The houſe of the wicked ſhall be deſtroyed: but the tabernacle of the righteous ſhall floriſh.*

THE *houſe of the wicked*] The wicked himſelfe & his whole eſtate, *ſhall be deſtroyed*; ſhall be ouerthrowne and rooted out by the curſe of God: either ſuddenly, and all at once; as it is to bee ſeene in ſome, or in continuance of time, and by degrees,

degrees, as it falleth out to others. *But the tabernacle of the righteous*, his habitation himſelfe; and thoſe things which belong vnto him, *ſhall florish*, ſhall be bleſſed of God and made proſperous. For the one hath all the threatnings of the law, and the curſes of the Almightie directed againſt him, and who can repell the force and violence of ſuch artillerie? And the other is planted, watered, and preſerued by Gods owne hand, and therefore he is vndoubtedly well rooted, and happie. The former part of the verſe is a ſimile taken from caſtles or buildings aſſaulted with enemies; and the latter is a metaphor from trees and plants commodiouſly growing.

Verſe 12. *There is a way that ſeemeth right to a man: but the iſſues thereof are the waies of death.*

THere is a way] Namely, a lewd and ſinfull courſe of life, *that ſeemeth right to a man*, which wicked men perſwade themſelues to be free from dangers. It is agreeable to their luſts and carnall reaſon, it maketh either for their pleaſures, or profits: they haue been long acquainted with it; they haue found proſperous ſucceſſe by it; they ſee the greater perſonages, and number of men to trauell in it; and therfore conclude of ſafetie therein. *But the iſſues thereof are the waies of death:* it is certaine that the beginning of it, and firſt ſtep into it, did tend to death; but when they haue proceeded in it, they ſhall come at the laſt to their iourneys end, and that is to be deſtroied for euer.

Verſe 13. *Euen in laughing the heart is ſorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heauineſſe.*

THis is to bee vnderſtood of the vngodly, and ſuch as are priuie to themſelues of ſome great euils; who *euen in laughing*, amidſt their ſports and greateſt delights, haue gripings of feares, and vexations in their hearts. *And the end of that mirth is heauineſſe*, when their pleaſures are ended their paines will begin: their mirth was mingled with many ſecret

heart-bitings, but their ſorrow ſhall be pure of it ſelfe, without all mixture, and haue neither hope nor comfort to delay the bitterneſſe of it. The former condition of the godly, that wherein they liued before their deliuerance by Chriſt was confirmed vnto them, is a paterne of the preſent eſtate of the wicked, and it we haue related vnto vs by the holy Ghoſt himſelfe, ſaying, that *through feare of death, they were all their life time ſubiect to bondage.* Now if the caſe of ſuch be no better, euen then when it is at the beſt, what will become of them at their death, and after, before the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt, and eternally, when they ſhall lie vnder the wrath of God, and ſuffer the ful and perfect puniſhment of al their rebellions? If a malefactor be affrighted amongſt his companions, where ſeemeth to bee nothing but ſafetie, before his apprehenſion, ſhall hee be able to behold the face of the Iudge, to heare his ſentence of condemnation, and to endure the execution and puniſhment of death without terror and torment?

Heb.2.15.

Verſe 14. *He that is of a froward heart, ſhall be ſatiate with his owne waies: and a good man with that which is in him.*

HE *that is of a froward heart,*] Which ſetteth his heart vpon lewdnes and euill, and declineth euery day, waxing worſe and worſe, *ſhall be ſatiate with his owne waies,* euen ſated and filled full, with the plagues and iudgements which his owne deſerts ſhall draw vpon him. *And a good man with that which is in him,* ſhall abundantly enioy both inward comforts, and outward happineſſe, for his conſtant vprightneſſe, and holy behauiour. For as the waies of euery man be diſpoſed according to his heart, ſo doth the Lord yeeld retribution to him for recompence, anſwerably. The more euill hee findeth to be in any; the more iudgements hee will heape vpon him; and as others haue their ſoules ſeaſoned with vertue, grace, and ſinceritie, the greater meaſure of bliſſe and felicitie they ſhall receiue at his hands.

Verſ.15.

Verſe 15. *The fooliſh beleeueth euery thing: but hee that is prudent taketh heed to his ſteps.*

THE *foole*] He that is ſillie for his owne ſoule, and ignorant without vnderſtanding of the matters of God, *beleeueth euery thing*, raſhly giuing credit to euery vaine tale that is told him: and hearkning to euery deceiuer that miſleadeth him. *But a prudent man*, he that is of a ſetled iudgement, and prouident for his owne ſafetie, *taketh heede to his ſteps*, examineth firſt what waight and ſoundnes there is in that which is ſpoken, before hee conſent to it, either in perſwaſion or practiſe. And this ſentence hath place eſpecially in point of greateſt importance, and of higheſt nature, ſuch as tend to the ſeruice, or diſhonour of God, ſuch as concerne the euerlaſting welfare or woe of man: in theſe the foole hath his eares open to all, or much that is affirmed, excepting the truth, an impoſtor, the meſſenger of Satan, a champion for ſinne ſhall be heard, when a faithfull Miniſter of God, bringing cleere warrant for his ſayings, ſhall be reiected. And in theſe a godly wiſe man will be conſiderate, he will not embrace all that a ſeducer will be readie to deliuer: hee will not ſet his foote in the waies of ſinne, wherein deceiuers ſollicite him to tread. Whoſoeuer will preuaile with him in theſe materiall cauſes, muſt produce his witneſſe, euen Gods owne teſtimonie, either directly, or by conſequent, to confirme his ſaying.

Verſe 16. *A wiſe man feareth, and departeth from euill: but a foole rageth and is careleſſe.*

A *Wiſe man*] He that is religious, and truly godly: when he is rebuked or heareth Gods threatnings, or beholdeth Gods iudgements, or foreſeeth plagues to come, by the preſent view and ſight of ſinne, feareth, his heart trembleth, both in reſpect of Gods diſpleaſure, and the miſchiefe like to follow, *and departeth from euill*, both purgeth his heart by humiliation, and redreſſeth his way by reformation. *But the foole*

rageth and is careleſſe: a ſinfull perſon ſcorneth when he is reproued, and preſumeth of impunitie and freedome from all perils: he ſcorneth at him that giueth the admonition, and fauoureth the ſinne which is reproued, and therefore frequenteth the practiſe of it the more, and with greater liking, rather then departeth from it.

Verſ. 17. *He that is haſtie to anger committeth follie, and he that plotteth miſchiefe is hated.*

HE *that is haſtie to anger*, is ſuddenly moued to diſtempered paſſions, before hee hath aduiſedly examined the cauſe of offence: *committeth folly*, breaketh out into ſome abſurditie or iniuſtice by word or deed: *and he that plotteth miſchiefe*, which diſſembling his diſpleaſure, intendeth reuenge, and ſetteth his thoughts on worke how to effect it: *is hated*, is abhorred of God, and deteſted by thoſe that finde out his malitious practiſes. His waſpiſh and chollerick humour hath drawne him into ſin againſt God, and malitiouſnes towards his neighbour: and therefore as hee exerciſeth the workes of vniuſt hatred, being an aduerſarie to the Lord, and righteous men, ſo he cauſeth himſelfe to be iuſtly hated, and dealt withall as an odious miſcreant.

Verſe 18. *The fooliſh doe inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*

THe *fooliſh*] Such as will learne no wiſedome, nor practiſe any goodnes, *inherit folly*; ſhame and other puniſhments are due vnto them for their ignorance and ſinfulnes, and ſhall in time alſo light vpon them. *But the prudent are crowned with knowledge*, ſuch as are diſcreete and godly wiſe, ſhall receiue the glorious fruite of their vnderſtanding and obedience. For by being crowned, is meant commonly in the Scriptures, honour and dignity: and for the certaintie of the reward on both ſides, he ſpeaketh of that which is to come, as if it were preſently performed.

Verſ. 19.

Verſ. 19. *The euill ſhall bow before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*

THe euill ſhall bow before the good] Sinfull perſons ſhall be depreſſed and brought downe, and godly men exalted and raiſed vp: they ſhall crouch in token of ſubmiſſion, and theſe ſhall haue obeyſance done to them in token of honour. *And the wicked at the righteous:* the meaning is, that good men ſhall not onely be greater then the euill, but ſuch as the euill muſt be driuen to ſeeke vnto for helpe and fauour: as ſuters vſe to wait at the gates of a great perſonage, till either he come forth, or they bee let in, and admitted to his preſence. This abiection of the wicked, and aduancement of the godly, is not generall to all in this life, notwithſtanding it often befalleth many; but at the day of the Lord euery ſinfull wretch ſhall be taken downe with miſerable debaſement, and euery faithfull Chriſtian ſhal be exalted to a glorious dignity, when the one ſort ſhall ſtand at the barre & be arraigned, and condemned with the diuels; and the other ſit, as it were at the bench, with Ieſus Chriſt, and be made their Iudges.

Verſ. 20. *The poore is hated, euen of his owne neighbour: but the friends of the rich are many.*

THe poore, he that is fallen into pouerty, or diſgrace with great perſonages, *is hated of his neighbour*, they that dwel by him: and his kinsfolkes and old acquaintance, and ſuch as were wont to be familiar with him, being yet but carnall men, will alter their countenance and behauiour towards him, and picke quarrels againſt him, and take any occaſion to alienate themſelues from him. *But the friends of the rich are many:* diuers fawne on the wealthie, and flatter them, and make a faire ſhew of loue and good will; when as notwithſtanding they beare no ſuch affection to them in their hearts.

Verſ. 21. *He that deſpiſeth his neighbour is a ſinner: but hee that ſheweth mercy to the poore, bleſſed is he.*

THis verſe dependeth on the former, wherein was declared the property of fleſhly men, which will deſpiſe their friends & neighbours in their neceſſity: and here is ſet downe their ſtate and condition which ſhew ſuch vnfaithfulnes, that he which doth deſpiſe his neighbour when hee is poore and diſtreſſed, ſhall be a ſinner; that is, ſhall be charged with ſinne, and conuicted of it, and plagued for it. The ſame word is ſo taken in the booke of Kings: where *Bathſheba* telleth *Dauid*, how needfull it was for him to appoint his ſucceſſor before his death, *Elſe*, ſaith ſhe, *when my Lord the King ſhall ſleepe with his father, I and my ſonne Salomon ſhall be ſinners:* that is, ſhall be counted as guiltie perſons, and puniſhed as offenders. Now this is illuſtrated by the contrary, the great reward which they ſhall receiue that pitie poore men in their afflictions, and ſeeke to relieue and ſuccour them in word, deed, and countenance: they are pronounced bleſſed, ſuch as ſhall abundantly partake of Gods fauours and mercies.

Chotae.

1. King. 1. 21.

Verſ. 22. *Doe they not erre that imagine euill? but to them that thinke on good things* ſhall be *mercy and truth.*

THe queſtion is not moued heere in way of doubting, as though it were vncertaine whether they that ſtudie to do euill ſhould ſpeed euill or not, but of aſſurance that they ſhall certainly faile of their hope and expectation. And therefore the interrogation is put for a confident aſſeueration of that which is affirmed: that neuer any wicked man could obtaine his hope to his contentment in his ſinfull deuices. Either hee commeth too ſhort of ỳ which he concludeth to do, or miſſeth of that happineſſe which he looked for in his exploits, or falleth into thoſe troubles which he neuer ſtood in feare of. *But to them that thinke on good things*, which ſet their minds to meditate

meditate of performing good ſeruices to God and his people, in the beſt manner, *to them* ſhall be *mercy and truth*: the mercy of God ſhall be manifeſted by the multitude of his bleſſings vpon them, and his truth declared by the fulfilling of his promiſes to them.

Verſe 23. *In all labour there is abundance: but the talke of the lips onely* bringeth *want*.

IN *all labour*] In euery honeſt vocation wherein a man ſhall diligently and faithfully employ himſelfe, *there is abundance*, a competent meaſure of prouiſion to bee found for his owne maintenance, & a ſurpluſſage to beſtow on other good vſes. *But the talke of the lips only*, bare and vaine words, when a man will labour with his tongue, and let the reſt of his members be idle: when the mouth ſhall bee readie to diſcourſe of his buſineſſe, but the hands be negligent to performe it; when words alone ſhall bee vſed in ſtead of workes, that *bringeth onely want*, filleth him with need and pouerty.

Verſ. 24. *The riches of the wiſe are their crowne: but the fooliſhneſſe of fooles* remaineth *follie*.

THey which haue wealth with godly wiſedome, are made the more honourable by it for their credit; for ſo much the word *crowne*, doth often import in the Scriptures. And though ſinfull fooles haue neuer ſo great abundance of riches, they nothing auaile them againſt their fooliſhneſſe. They bee as ignorant and more wicked then if they poſſeſſed nothing: their leaudneſſe is not made the leſſe grieuous and damnable by their great ſubſtance: and their abſurdities bee more ſeene, and noted to their ſhame, then if they liued in a poore eſtate and obſcurely.

Verſ. 25. *A faithfull witneſſe deliuereth ſoules: but a deceitfull one forgeth lies*.

A *Faithfull witneſſe*] Which both hath ſure knowledge of that which he affirmeth, and an vpright heart to doe ſer-

uice to God, and good to his brethren by his teſtimonie, deliuereth ſoules, endeauoureth by declaring the truth to helpe innocent men out of their troubles, and infamie whereinto they are fallen, or like to come by vniuſt accuſations, or falſe ſurmiſes of them. For by *ſoules*, in the Scriptures is often meant the perſons of men. As Exod. 1.5. All the ſoules that came out of the loynes of *Iacob*, were ſeuentie ſoules. *But a deceitfull one*, a falſe witneſſe, or craftie accuſer, *forgeth lies*, as ſomtimes hee peruerteth the truth, and abuſeth it to croſſe iuſtice and true dealing; ſo if that will not be for his turne to effect his purpoſe, then he inuenteth a lie, and ſetteth a colour vpon it to deſtroy or moleſt his harmeleſſe neighbours. For here doth the holy Ghoſt oppoſe the deceitfull to the faithful, and forging of lies, to deliuering of ſoules, in regard of the effect that it worketh, becauſe by that meanes many men are brought to danger and deſtruction. And as this is vnderſtood of the whole man, that a faithfull witneſſe will deliuer him; ſo it is true concerning the part of man, the ſoule ſo properly called, that a faithfull witneſſe, either Miniſter, or priuate perſon, according as opportunity ſerueth, will ſpecially labour to deliuer the heart from ſinne, by teſtifying the truth of God againſt it, and ſo preſerue his brother from deſtruction. This is according to that which Saint *Iames* ſpeaketh: *Brethren, if any of you haue erred from the truth, and ſome man hath conuerted him; let him know, that he which hath conuerted the ſinner from going aſtray out of his way, ſhall ſaue a ſoule from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſinnes.* On the other ſide, the falſe Prophets, and ſeducers of all men, are the moſt deceitfull and dangerous, and doe greateſt miſchiefe with their corrupt doctrine and peſtilent errours. The ſenſe of this verſe is agreeable to the ſixth verſe of the twelfth chapter, where it is ſaid, that *the talking of the wicked, is to lie in waite for blood: but the mouth of the righteous will deliuer them.* There it was obſerued, and heere it is confirmed that wicked men mix their crueltie with craft and falſhood: *For they lie in wait for blood*, and they are *deceitfull*, and *forge lies*. And that a good man will haue a good word readie to helpe them that are oppreſſed.

Iam. 5.19.20.

ſed. For *the mouth of the righteous wil deliuer them*, and *a faithfull witneſſe will deliuer ſoules*.

Verſ. 26. *In the feare of the Lord there is aſſurance of ſtrength, and he will be a refuge for his children.*

IN *the feare of the Lord*] In ſoundneſſe of religion, and true godlines, *there is aſſurance of ſtrength*, certainty of defence both for ſoule and body. And hee *will bee a refuge for his children*. This is added to the former clauſe, as a reaſon for confirmation of it. Godly men muſt needs be in good ſafety, becauſe they be Gods children, whom he in Chriſt hath begotten to himſelfe, by the immortall ſeed of the word, and hee doth perpetually protect all his ſons and daughters.

Verſ. 27. *The feare of the Lord is a welſpring of life to auoid the ſnares of death.*

AS religion was cõmended in the former verſe to be forcible for the defence of them that imbrace it; ſo in this it is declared to be comfortable to them, and profitable, as appeareth by the ſimilitude of a welſpring, whereof there was great vſe in thoſe hot countries, for the refreſhing of men and cattell that were thirſtie: and the moyſtening of the earth, to make it the more fruitfull. And therefore it was giuen for a principall praiſe to the land of Canaan, that it was *a good land, in the which were riuers of water and fountaines*, &c. And Deut. 8. 7.
Achſah the daughter of *Caleb*, made a requeſt to her father to giue her a bleſſing, that is, to doe her a ſpeciall fauour: which was, that as hee had beſtowed vpon her *a drie coaſt*, a barren field, ſo *he would* alſo *giue her ſprings of water*, a more fertile Ioſh. 15.
peece of ground, which he accordingly yeelded vnto her. And it is called a Welſpring of life, both for the conſtant fulneſſe of it, as neuer failing, as alſo in reſpect of the gratious effects thereof, becauſe that bleſſedneſſe in this life, and eternall life in the world to come, doth abundantly proceed from it. *To auoid the ſnares of death*: that is, it both giueth men inſtructi-

ons,

ons, and worketh in them a care to flie from sin, whereby they would be otherwise intangled to destruction. The same words are in the 13. chap. vers. 14. where they haue been already expounded.

Vers. 28. *In the multitude of the people is the honour of a King: and through want of people, commeth the destruction of the Prince.*

IN *the multitude of the people*] When the number of the subiects are encreased and prosper, it is both for the glory and safety of the Prince. *And through want of people,* when they are few and feeble, *commeth the destruction of the Prince:* hee is exposed to perils, as wanting power to defend his state and territories; and to contempt also, contrarie to the honour before mentioned. Both the former clause of this sentence, and the latter are most truly verified, when Princes are agents in the multiplying or diminishing of their subiects. That King is duly honoured who by his mercy, wisedome, fortitude and good gouernment, procureth the welfare and encrease of his people: and he is subiect to ignominie and mischiefe, which through tyrannie and oppression doth cause the number of them to decrease.

Vers. 29. *He that is slow to wrath is of great wisedome: but he that is of a hastie minde exalteth follie.*

HE *that is slow to wrath*] Which is able to master the rage of his affections so, that he will not bee carried away to distemper; contrary to the rules of lawfull anger, is of great *wisedome:* hath receiued *from aboue* in his heart, that *pure,* Iam. 3. 17. *peaceable, and gentle wisedome,* which Saint *Iames* speaketh of; and doth also declare the same by his long sufferance and patient forbearance, when by indignities and wrongs hee is prouoked. But he that is *of an hasty mind,* being rashly moued to passion, without due cause of displeasure, or immoderately offended, when the fault deserueth not so much anger;

exalteth

exalteth follie; doth openly commit it, as though he would lift it vp that all men might ſee it.

Verſ. 30. *A ſound heart is the life of the fleſh; but enuie is the rotting of the bones.*

A *Sound heart*] That is, a tender, kind, and compaſſionate heart toward them that be in afflictions, with a deſire to relieue and ſuccour them: for the word ſignifieth *an healing heart*, ſuch a one as wiſheth well to them, and ſtudieth how it may beſt comfort them, ſo free it is from euill will and deſpite, and grudging at other mens good eſtate, *is the life of fleſh*, bringeth health and ſoundneſſe to the whole man that hath it. *But enuie is the rotting of the bones*; it is painful to the mind, and hurtfull to the body, and will quickly conſume a man, and bring him to his end, as the diſeaſes which lie in the bones, and eate vp the marrow.

Verſ. 31. *Hee that oppreſſeth the poore, reprocheth him that made him: but he that ſheweth mercy to the poore, doth honour him.*

BY *poore*] Hee meaneth, not only ſuch as liue in want and penurie; but thoſe which are vnder the burthen of any other afflictions, and vnable to defend themſelues: and by *oppreſſion*, he vnderſtandeth all kind of hard dealing, whether it bee by craft or force, or falſe accuſations and ſlanders, or bitter and contumelious ſpeeches to bring them into contempt or hatred: Hee that thus wrongeth any diſtreſſed perſon, *reprocheth him that made him*: that is, the Lord who hath allotted to him that poore eſtate. *But hee that ſheweth mercy to the poore*, which doth good, and miniſtreth comfort to them that are in miſery, by helping the Lords ſeruants, declareth his loue and eſtimation of the Lord his maſter.

Verſ.

Verſe. 32. *The wicked man is purſued in his miſerie: but the righteous hath hope in his death.*

Iiddache. THe wicked is purſued] The word which we tranſlate *purſued*, ſignifieth to be thruſt at, or to throw downe: meaning, that when his calamity once beginneth, he ſhall be driuen on forwards vntill he fall into deſtruction. But the ſtate of the righteous is contrary, for *he hath hope*, that is, not onely confidence and good expectation, but refuge and deliuerance in greateſt extremities, yea in the very danger and torment of death it ſelfe, yea then eſpecially, and more then euer at any time before.

Verſ. 33. *Wiſedome reſteth in the heart of him that hath vnderſtanding: but that which is in the heart of fooles ſhall bee knowne.*

WIſedome] That is, holy and heauenly wiſedome and grace, *reſteth in the heart*, (continueth therein, and dwelleth as in her houſe and habitation) *of him that hath vnderſtanding*: namely, of euery ſuch one as is of ſound iudgement and ſincere affection. *And that which is in the heart of fooles ſhall be knowne*: that ſinfulneſſe and corruption which they nouriſh in their ſoules, and take pleaſure in, will breake out and diſcouer it ſelfe at one time or other. The agreement of the two cauſes together will the better appeare, if that bee ſupplied which is vnderſtood in each of them, which may bee in this manner; Wiſdome reſteth in the heart of him that hath vnderſtanding, and will be manifeſted; and follie inhabiteth in the heart of fooles, and ſhall be knowne.

Verſ. 34. *Iuſtice exalteth a Nation: but ſinne is ſhame to the people.*

IVſtice] That is, true religion, and obedience to Gods holy commandements, and the enacting, & executing of wholeſome

ſome lawes *doth exalt a nation*; cauſeth the inhabitants of well ordered Common-wealths, and countries, and cities, and townes, to proſper, and bee commended. But *ſinne* practiſed and not puniſhed, *is a ſhame to people*; it bringeth to contempt, and maketh them infamous, and draweth downe iudgements on the places where it is committed and tollerated.

Verſ. 35. *The fauour of a King is toward a wiſe ſeruant: but his wrath ſhall be toward him that cauſeth ſhame.*

THe *fauour of a King, &c.* Euery wiſe king, and all other godly great perſonages, will take delight in, and ſhew countenance vnto their ſeruants, or officers, or any other that depend vpon them, ſo farre as they ſhall finde them diligent, obedient, diſcreet and truſtie: and therefore will alſo be readie to reward them, according as their faithfull ſeruice ſhall deſerue. *But his wrath ſhall be towards him that cauſeth ſhame.* He that by folly offendeth his gouernour; eſpecially if he diſcredit him and his houſe, by lewd pranks and miſdemeanours, muſt look to feele his maſters diſpleaſure, and that with frowning checks, chiding, puniſhment, or diſplacing.

CHAPTER. XV.

Verſ. 1. *A ſoft anſwere turneth away wrath: but a grieuous word ſtirreth vp anger.*

A*Soft anſwere*] Gentle, milde, and peaceable ſpeeches, [*turneth away wrath*] pacifie the indignation of him that is diſpleaſed. Hee ſpeaketh of that which commeth to paſſe moſt commonly, though not alwaies: for ſometimes men of a froward and feruile diſpoſition are the more violent, by how much they are mildlier dealt with: and ſharpe rebukes preuaile

uaile moſt with ſuch, to tame them with feare, which would not be intreated with faire perſwaſions: [*But grieuous words*] bitter, biting, and prouoking ſpeeches [*ſtirre vp wrath*] not only increaſe it in them, in whom before it was kindled, but kindle it in them who before were kindly affected. *Iacob* was much indeared to *Rachel*, and bare much with her infirmities, and great corruptions, yet when her owne barrennes, and her ſiſters fruitfulnes had ſtirred her vp to enuie, and her enuie had made her paſſionate, and her paſſion had cauſed her tongue to ſpeake abſurdly, requiring *Iacob* to giue her children, otherwiſe ſhe could not liue, it is ſaid that *his anger was kindled againſt her*, notwithſtanding his ſingular loue; how then would he haue taken the matter if ſhe had reuiled him, and railed on him, if ſhe had belied him, and charged him with peridiouſnes, as denying due beneuolence vnto her, and defrauding her of her matrimonial right, and yet could be readie, and ſtrange enough to beget baſtards on harlots?

Gen.30.2.

Verſ.2. *The tongue of the wiſe ſetteth foorth good knowledge: but the mouth of fooles powreth out folly.*

THe meaning is, that godly prudent men will vtter good matter, and their ſpeeches ſhall carrie a grace and force with them, as being rightly placed, and wiſely ordered. And ſinful vngodly perſons on the other ſide, either vomit out that which is hurtfull, falſe, or vaine: or elſe peruert and abuſe that which in it ſelfe is true and wholeſome. Good men indeede through the defect of wiſdome and goodneſſe, doe ſometimes fault with their lips, and faile to ſpeake that which is meete: (for the beſt attaine not to the fulneſſe of grace, and therefore can doe nothing in complete perfection) but the wicked doe neuer ſpeake any thing well, albeit they alwaies vtter not that which is ill. When *Cayphas* and *Balaam* were prophecying, and deliuered the words of God, yet their tongues were vnſanctified, notwithſtanding the matter ſpoken by them was diuine and holy.

Verſ.3.

Verſe 3. *The eyes of the Lord* are *in euery place, beholding the euill and the good.*

THe *eyes of the Lord*] His certaine ſight and knowledge. He ſpeaketh of God according to man, attributing eyes vnto him, (which hee, being a ſpirit, hath not) becauſe wee ſee with our eyes, and beſt know the things which wee ſee: [*in euery place*] whereſoeuer any man is: [*behold*] not onely diſcerne and perceiue, but purpoſely obſerue and marke, and that continually, as the forme of the word in that participle importeth: [*the euill and the good*] all ſorts of men, together with their hearts and waies. *Dauid* ſaid not that which concerned himſelfe onely in particuler, but which belonged to all mankinde in generall: he ſpake not as the ſonne of *Ieſſe*, but as the ſonne of *Adam*, and for all *Adams* children, and that which euery one might as truly affirme for himſelfe, when he directed his ſpeech to the Lord in this manner: *O Lord thou ſearcheſt me, and knoweſt me. Thou knoweſt my downe ſitting, and mine vpriſing: thou vnderſtandeſt my thought afarre off. Thou compaſſeſt my path, and my lying downe, and art acquainted with all my waies. Whither ſhall I goe from thy ſpirit? or whither ſhall I flye from thy preſence, &c.* *Tſophoth.* Pſal. 139. 1. &c.

Verſe 4. *A wholeſome tongue is* as *a tree of life: but the frowardnes thereof is* as *a breach made by the winde.*

THe purpoſe and drift of this ſentence is, to declare that the courſe and cuſtome of godly mens ſpeeches is both comfortable and profitable to them which know how to make vſe thereof: as was that goodly tree of life in Paradiſe, continually bearing fruite, ſo pleaſant and pretious. On the contrary ſide, as a bluſtering winde, which throweth downe trees and houſes, doth much harme: ſo a violent and venomous tongue, cauſing troubles and calamities, is very pernitious and hurtfull.

Verſ. 5.

Verſ.5. *A foole deſpiſeth his fathers inſtruction: but he that regardeth correction, is prudent.*

A *Foole*] A wicked and vngodly childe, [*deſpiſeth*] either refuſeth to heare, or elſe to obey [*his fathers inſtruction*] that admonition or counſell which his parents or other gouernours giue vnto him: [*but hee that regardeth*] ſubmitteth himſelfe vnto, and is bettered by [*correction*] either in words or deedes, giuen by whomſoeuer, hauing authoritie ouer him, [*is prudent*] ſheweth wiſedome, and receiueth the fruite of the ſame.

Verſe 6. *The houſe of the righteous hath much treaſure: but in the reuennes of the wicked is trouble.*

THe *houſe of the righteous*] That is, either euery righteous man hath his houſe repleniſhed with great ſtore of wealth and ſubſtance, or elſe a leſſe quantitie doth as well ſuffice him, God ſeeing it to be better and ſafer for him. And whereas ſometimes it falleth out, that godlie men haue neither ſo much as others poſſeſſe, nor as themſelues deſire, and ſeeme to ſtand in neede of, it groweth from the defect of their godlineſſe, for which the Lord correcteth them with ſome penurie and want, and whereby their hearts faile of that fulneſſe of contentment, which more pietie and grace would worke in them.

The latter clauſe of this verſe preuenteth an obiection that might be made againſt the former, in this manner: Why ſhould righteouſneſſe bee commended for making the righteous rich, ſithence ſinne ſeemeth to make the ſtate of ſinners more proſperous then theirs? To this it is anſwered, that troubles are intermingled with their wealth and poſſeſſions; as paines and toyle in getting, and cares and feares in keeping, and griefe and anger in forgoing of all, or any part of them.

Verſ.7.

Verſ. 7. *The lips of the wiſe doe ſpread abroad knowledge: but the heart of the fooliſh, that which is not right.*

HE compareth the lips of wiſe men to the hands of good ſeedeſ-men, who skilfully, and in due manner and meaſure, at euery ſtep doe ſcatter the corne into the tilth: ſhewing it to be a note of ſound vnderſtanding, to take opportunitie whereſoeuer it is offered, at home or abroad, to direct their talke to the benefit and edification of the company. On the contrary ſide, the wicked, out of the euill treaſure of their hearts, bring forth euill things, vttering vanitie, and errours, and noyſome ſpeeches, like thoſe that make it their worke to ſow Cockle, and Tares, and Darnell, or other weeds, which are onely venomous and hurtfull. In the former part of the ſentence, the heart is to be vnderſtood, which miniſtreth matter to the lips: And in the latter, the lips are alſo meant, which are the inſtruments of the heart: as if he ſhould haue ſaid; The lips of the wiſe, out of that grace which is in the heart, doe ſpread abroad knowledge, and that which is right: and the heart of the fooliſh, by the peruerſenes of the lips, doth ſpread abroad ignorance, and that which is not right.

Verſ. 8. *The Sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the righteous is acceptable vnto him.*

THE *ſacrifice of the wicked*] Their beſt workes, euen thoſe which ſeeme moſt to ſauor of deuotion, and their very prayers themſelues [*are abomination to the Lord*] ſins which he abhorreth & for which he will puniſh them: [*but the prayer of the righteous*] and all other their ſeruices which they faithfully performe [*are acceptable to him*] wherewith, through Ieſus Chriſt he is well pleaſed, and for the ſame will gratiouſly reward them. For neither the diſpleaſure of God againſt his enemies, nor his fauour towards his people, are without efficacie and effect: his hatred is ioyned with iuſtice, and will certainly worke the woe of him that ſhall prouoke it: and his

loue is full of goodneſſe, and will make him bleſſed vpon whom it is ſetled.

Verſ. 9. *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but he loueth him that followeth righteouſneſſe.*

THE *way of the wicked*] The whole courſe of his life and behauiour: whatſoeuer he ſaith, and all that he doth [*is abomination to the Lord*] is filthie and loathſome in his eyes, prouoking him in anger to plague him. And this is not to be vnderſtood only of the groſſe faults of ſinfull men, when they directly tranſgreſſe the law of God, but of euery thing elſe which they take in hand, as long as they walke after the fleſh: as labour and trauell; their meate and drinke; their ſleepe and neceſſarie refreſhings: though in exerciſes not vtterly vnlawfull; though in matters that be meerely ciuill; though in actions euery way commendable for others to performe. And hereof the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, when he ſaith to *Titus, that to the pure all things are pure; but vnto them that are defiled and vnbeleeuing nothing is pure, but euen their minds and conſciences are defiled.* Tit. 15.

But hee loueth him] Eſteemeth him, and vſeth him as his owne child; cauſeth his heart to feele the comfort of his fauour, and will in due time make it manifeſt to all the world how deere he is vnto him [*who followeth after righteouſneſſe*] which is not cold, or ſlow, or vnſtable in doing of good; but with might and maine ſtriueth conſtantly to obtaine the habit and encreaſe of goodneſſe. The word ſignifieth earneſtly to purſue, being a Metaphor taken from the eagerneſſe of wild beaſts, or rauenous fowles, or of any kind of creatures that liue by the ſpoyle of others, which will runne or flie, both faſt and farre, rather then be diſappointed of their prey. True it is, that all are not of equall graces, nor any one at all times equally affected to that which is iuſt and vpright; but none muſt leaue off endeauour to ſeeke it. Euery man is to make it his gaine, and to abandon all the impediments which would ſtay him from it. The ſenſe and meaning of the words will be *Meraddeph.*

the better diſcerned, if that bee ſupplied which is vnderſtood in either part of the ſentence, in this manner: The Lord abhorreth the way and perſon of the wicked, becauſe hee followeth iniquitie: but he loueth the perſon and way of the godly, becauſe he followeth righteouſneſſe.

Verſe 10. *Inſtruction* [*is*] *euill to him that forſaketh the way:* [*and*] *he that hateth correction ſhall die.*

INſtruction] Either wholeſome doctrine publikely taught, or faithfull admonition priuately giuen: [*is euill*] not in it ſelfe (for the Scripture calleth it *A pearle*, and *Holy thing* in one place, and preferreth it before ſiluer and gold: and the richeſt Iemmes in another) but it ſo ſeemeth to him that is not willing to obey it: in whom alſo it is an occaſion of diſtempered paſſions, and hardneſſe of heart: [*to him that forſaketh the way*] not to euery one that miſtaketh the way, or through infirmitie ſomtimes ſwarueth from it; but to ſuch a one as either obſtinately refuſeth to chuſe and walke in the right path of ſaluation, when the knowledge of it is offered vnto him; or wilfully departeth from it after that he hath made ſome entrance thereunto: And [*hee that hateth correction*] which is imbittered by rebukes, and not bettered by chaſtiſements: [*ſhall die*] is in danger to periſh eternally at the laſt, and to be ſurpriſed with ſome ſpeedy, ſudden, ſhamefull, or curſed death in the meane ſeaſon: and before that, to haue ſome heauie iudgement to fall vpon him. Matth. 7. 6. Prou. 3. 15.

Verſ. 11. *The graue and deſtruction are before the Lord: how much more the hearts of the ſonnes of men?*

THe graue] The darkeſt places in the ground, or deepeſt places in the waters, where any dead corps is, or hath bin couered, and conſequently all others as obſcure as they, or lower then they, euen to the very center of the earth: [*and deſtruction*] the place and ſtate of the damned ſpirits: [*are before the Lord*] hee ſeeth both how the bodies conſume,

and how the ſoules ſuffer, and what bee the thoughts of them that ſuſtaine ſuch infernall torments: [*how much more the hearts*] the counſels, and purpoſes, and diſcourſes, and motions of all the faculties of the ſoules: [*of the ſonnes of men*] of euery one in euery age that is deſcended from the race of mankinde, ſo long as hee liueth on earth. Yet is not this an argument from imparitie, in reſpect of God, as though it were eaſie for him to behold ſome thoughts, and hard to find out others: (for all are equally comprehended of him) but in regarde of men, which with greater difficultie attaine to the knowledge of that whereunto their ſenſe is not able to reach, and with more facilitie diſcerne that which is ſubiect to their ſenſes: and ſo according to themſelues they conceiue of the Lord.

Now if they apprehend that hee doth continually obſerue and looke vpon things that bee ſo abſtruſe and hidden, they may bee eaſily perſwaded that hee is not vnacquainted with that which is more conſpicuous and apparant.

Verſe 12. *A ſcorner loueth not him that rebuketh him: neither will he goe vnto the wiſe.*

A *Scorner*] A leaud vngratious perſon, which obſtinately hath giuen ouer himſelfe to worke wickedneſſe, and derideth all that diſlike of his waies: [*loueth not him that rebuketh him*] but hateth both the reprouer and the reproofe, the man and his admonition: according as was ſaid before, that *inſtruction is euill to him that forſaketh the way*: [*neither will he goe to the wiſe*] nor be willing that the wiſe ſhould come to him. He affecteth not the company and ſocietie of them that be godly, becauſe hee knoweth that they will looke into his licentious life, and tell him plainlie of his inordinate behauiour. If *Achab* tooke it ſo offenſiuely that *Eliah*, although ſent by the Lord, ſhould enter into *Naboths* vineyard, whereof he was taking poſſeſſion, to the moleſting of him, as if an enemie were come vpon him; when ſhall wee thinke, would *Achab* of himſelfe haue repaired to *Eliah* to confeſſe his bloodie cruelties, to craue his prayers to God for pardon, and to

ſeeke direction for the attainment and teſtification of his repentance?

Verſ. 13. *A ioyfull heart maketh a good countenance: but by the ſorrow of the heart, the ſpirit is broken.*

A *ioyfull heart*] A glad and merrie minde, eſpecially hauing peace with God, and pardon of all his tranſgreſſions: [*maketh a good countenance*] cauſeth the whole body to bee more healthfull, but moſt of all ſheweth it ſelfe in the cheerefulnes of the face: for the affections of the minde pierce into the parts of the body, and chiefly appeare and worke in the countenance: [*but by the ſorrow of the heart*] when it is carnall or exceſſiue, [*the ſpirit is broken*] as the lookes are marred, ſo the ſpirits are dulled, and men by ſighings and griefes are often brought to ſuch extremities, as that they can hardly draw their breath. The oppoſition ſtandeth thus: A ioyfull heart maketh a good countenance, and by the comforts of it, the ſpirits are refreſhed: and a ſorrowfull heart maketh an heauie countenance, and by the griefes thereof the ſpirits are oppreſſed.

Verſe 14. *The heart of him that hath vnderſtanding ſeeketh knowledge: but the mouth of the foole is fed with fooliſhnes.*

THe *heart of him that hath vnderſtanding*] The vpright deſire, and ſincere affection of him that is wiſe vnto ſaluation, [*ſeeketh for knowledge*] moueth his lippes, and eares, and ſenſes, diligently to labour for increaſe of that holy wiſedome wherewith he is alreadie endued: [*but the mouth of the foole is fed with fooliſhnes*] that is, leaudnes of life, and practiſe of euill, are as delightfull to the minde of a ſinfull perſon, as delicious food is to the mouth and taſte: and he that hath a wicked heart, will bee as greedie to ſatisfie his luſt at euery moment, as he that hath a daintie tooth will be deſirous to feede on delicate diſhes at euery meale.

And ſo it is agreeable to that which is in the fourth Chap-

ter, where ſinners are ſaid *to eate the bread of wickedneſſe, and to drinke the wine of violence:* that is, It is meate and drinke to them to do miſchiefe. The ſenſe and oppoſition in effect tend to this, that the heart of a wiſe man ſeeketh for knowledge, and therefore his ſoule is fed with grace: and the heart of a foole doth hunt after follie, and therefore his mouth is fed with fooliſhnes.

Verſe 15. *All the daies of the afflicted are euill: but hee that hath a good heart,* is at *a continuall feaſt.*

BY the next two verſes following it may appeare, that by the afflicted is meant ſuch a one as (through defect of faith and contentednesſe) is troubled in minde for pouertie, or other outward calamities, becauſe his worldly eſtate and condition is no better. And of him it is ſaid, that *all his daies are euill:* that is, His whole life, during thoſe wants or croſſes, or feares, till the heart be holpen by grace [*are euill*] grieuous, tedious, and full of bitter vexations: *but hee that hath a good heart*] which is at peace with God, and freed from the power of infidelitie and ſinfulnes, [*is at a continuall feaſt*] is no more burdened with want at any time, then they which haue varietie of diſhes before them: and no leſſe filled with delights at all times, then they which are well ſatisfied with daintie meates and pleaſant wines. For the compariſon is from the comfort and commodities of banquets, and not the ſurfets and exceſſe thereof. Yet this is according to the degrees of that goodneſſe which is in mens ſoules: ſo much godlineſſe as they haue, ſo much refreſhing they finde in their afflictions: and becauſe none can attaine vnto a perfection thereof, therefore none ſhall be rid of all worldly grieſes, and dreads, and diſcontentments.

The ſenſe and expoſition tendeth to this purpoſe: All the daies of him that hath an euill heart, are as grieuous when he is afflicted, as if he were pinched with continuall penurie: but all the daies of him that hath a good heart, when hee is afflicted, are as ioyous as if he were at a continuall feaſt.

Verſ. 16.

Verſe 16. *Better is a little with the feare of the Lord, then great treaſure, and trouble therewith.*

BEtter is a little] A ſmall portion of goods is more profitable and comfortable, [*with the feare of the Lord*] with godlineſſe, cauſing a contented minde with ioy, and procuring Gods bleſſing for vſe, [*then great treaſure*] then the abundance of wealth, [*with trouble*] with ſinfulnes which bringeth trouble, namely feare, care, ſorrow, and many curſes with the checke of an ill conſcience: for where Religion is not, there griefes and vexations will be: and the more riches a wicked man hath, whereby he may ſeeme to bee free from all moleſtations, the more incumbrances he hath, which are alwaies ready to moleſt him.

Verſe 17. *Better is a dinner of greene hearbs where loue is, then a ſtalled Oxe, and hatred therewith.*

BEtter] More laudable in the houſe, and acceptable to the gueſt: [*is a dinner of greene hearbs*] very meane and ſlender fare: [*where loue is*] where is concord and heartie good will: [*then a ſtalled Oxe*] then great ſtore of good meate, and all manner of prouiſion that appertaineth to a ſumptuous feaſt: [*and hatred therewith*] an euill affection, either towards the parties bidden, or one towards another. The alienation of mindes, through the hard opinion which one hath of the other, is enough to marre the feaſt, though the cheare be neuer ſo great; but much more if there bee alſo variance amongſt them, if they breake out into bitterneſſe, into contention, and brawling, and eſpecially if quarrels, and violence inſue thereupon.

Verſ. 18. *An angry man ſtirreth vp contention: but he that is ſlow to wrath, appeaſeth ſtrife.*

AN angry man] Such ouer whom wrath and paſſion hath power, & in whom it raigneth, (for in the originall text

he is called *a man of anger*) [*ſtirreth vp contention*] encreaſeth diſſenſion where hee findeth diſcord, & maketh debate where peace was before: [*but he that is ſlow to wrath*] which can gouerne his affections, and not bee angrie without cauſe, or beyond meaſure, [*appeaſeth ſtrife*] endeauoureth to pacifie that diſpleaſure which one man hath conceiued againſt another: ſo that he is not onely vnlike to him that is giuen to anger, and will not raiſe contention as he doth, but taketh a courſe quite contrary to his, in reconciling them that be at variance.

Verſ. 19. *The way of the ſlothfull is as an hedge of thornes: but the way of the righteous is* [*as*] *a paued cauſey.*

THe *way of the ſluggard*] Not that leaud and licentious courſe of life which a ſinfull ſlothfull perſon doth take, (for that ſeemes plaine and pleaſant vnto him) but the good and honeſt conuerſation which he ought to walke in: [*is as an hedge of thornes*] appeareth to him to be full of difficulties and dangers, as a path that is all ouer-growne with thornes and briars: and therefore either hee dareth not enter into it, becauſe he feareth perils; or elſe he wil not proceed forwards, becauſe he findeth inconueniences: [*but the way of the righteous*] the vſe and exerciſe of thoſe good duties which euery godly diligent man performeth: [*is* [*as*] *a paued cauſey*] plaine, eaſie, and commodious: and therfore he goeth on in the ſame with good contentment and comfort.

Verſ. 20. *A wiſe ſonne reioyceth* [*his*] *father: but a fooliſh ſonne deſpiſeth his mother.*

A *Wiſe ſonne*] A child that is indued with grace, and vertuouſly inclined: [*reioyceth his father*] bringeth comfort to both parents for his piety and feare of God (if they themſelues be religious and godly; otherwiſe it may bee, they will be the more vexed at it) for his obedience and dutifull behauiour towards them, and for his owne good credit with all wiſe men that know his waies, and the bleſſing of God vpon his

his ſtate: [*but a fooliſh ſonne*] ſuch a one as is giuen to be leand and wicked, [*deſpiſeth his mother*] ſheweth contempt to mother and father, but eſpecially to the mother, becauſe hee preſumeth to be more bold with her, and becauſe his ſtate commonly doth leſſe depend vpon her. The oppoſition is thus to be conceiued:

A wiſe ſonne doth honour his father and mother, and therfore doth make them to bee glad: but a fooliſh ſonne deſpiſeth mother and father; and therfore cauſeth them to mourne.

Verſ. 21. *Fooliſhneſſe is ioy to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding; but a man of vnderſtanding will walke vprightly.*

FOoliſhneſſe] Wickedneſſe and ſinne: [*is ioy*] deſired, and committed, and continued in with delight: [*to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding*] a ſinfull man that is without all ſauing knowledge, and heauenly wiſedome: [*but a man of vnderſtanding*] ſuch a one as is godly wiſe, whoſe mind the holy Ghoſt hath enlightened with the ſound knowledge of the word: [*walketh vprightly*] ordereth his cónuerſation aright, and that in the truth and ſincerity of his heart. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: Fooliſhneſſe is ioy to him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding, and therefore he walketh peruerſly: but wiſedome is ioy to him that is a man of vnderſtanding, and therefore he walketh vprightly.

Verſ. 22. *Without counſell thoughts come to nought: but by ſtore of counſellers they ſhall be eſtabliſhed.*

WIthout counſell] When men in difficult and doubtfull caſes will truſt to their owne wit, and conſult with no others whether their enterpriſes bee conuenient, and by what meanes they may effect them: [*thoughts come to nought*] either they grow wearie of their attempts, or are defeated of their purpoſes: or though they ſeeme to ſucceed well for a time, yet their hopes are fruſtrate in the end: [*but by the multitude of counſellers*] which are wiſe, and giue faithfull counſell,

ſell, if their faithfull counſell be hearkened vnto, and obeyed: [*they are eſtabliſhed*] in the Hebrew text the Verbe is of the ſingular number, but collectiuely ſpoken: meaning, that all and euery one of thoſe thoughts which are ſo directed by counſell, ſhall haue a conſtant proſperous ſucceſſe at the laſt, if not at the firſt.

Takum.

Verſ. 23. *A ioy commeth to a man by the anſwere of his mouth: and how good is a word in due ſeaſon?*

A *Ioy commeth to a man*] A good man ſhall find either ſooner or later, comfort and gladneſſe [*by the anſwere of his mouth*] by the wholeſome words which hee vttereth with his mouth, whether hee anſwere to things demanded, or otherwiſe: [*and how good is a word in due ſeaſon?*] that is to ſay, marueilous profitable and delightfull to himſelfe and others, are faithfull ſpeeches diſcreetly deliuered, all meet circumſtances of time, place and perſons, being duly obſerued.

Verſ. 24. *The way of life is on high to the prudent, to auoide from hell beneath.*

THe *way of life*] The way that leadeth to life, yea the very true life it ſelfe: [*is on high to the prudent*] is not worldly, carnall, and earthly, but ſpirituall, holy, and heauenly: and therefore ſo farre as any man is wiſe to ſaluation, hee thinketh of heauenly things, and in all his behauiour tendeth towards heauen: [*to auoide*] that ſo walking therein hee may eſcape [*from hell beneath*] from death and deſtruction, and the place of eternall torment, which a ſenſuall courſe of life, and the deſire of earthly things will bring men vnto.

Verſ. 25. *The Lord will deſtroy the houſe of the proud: but he will eſtabliſh the borders of the widow.*

THe drift of this ſentence is to ſhew that the ſafety of no mans ſtate doth ſtand in his greatneſſe, nor perill of ruine in

in his ſmalneſſe; but that Gods diſpleaſure doth cut off the wicked, how ſtrong ſoeuer; and his fauour protecteth the godly, though neuer ſo feeble. *The Lord will deſtroy*] at one time or other, at once or by degrees, either by the wonted meanes of his plagues and iudgements, or by ſome immediate ſtroke from his owne hand: [*he will root out* (as the word ſignifieth) and vtterly ouerthrow: [*the houſe of the proud*] themſelues, their ſeed, ſubſtance, eſtimation, and whatſoeuer belongeth vnto them: [*but he will eſtabliſh*] defend and maintaine [*the borders of the widow*] thoſe liuings and poſſeſſions, or whatſoeuer elſe pertaineth to poore helpeleſſe perſons, of any ſort, which want power to reſiſt their oppreſſors. Yet is it not ſo to bee vnderſtood, as though they that were without friends, were alſo alwaies without wrongs; (for wee reade, and heare, and ſee the contrary continually) but that it is not in any mans power to ſpoile them at his pleaſure: and when they are oppreſſed, he will take their cauſe into his hands, in iuſtice and anger to puniſh their aduerſaries, and by grace and prouidence to recompence them. This is the ſenſe of the oppoſition:

The Lord will deſtroy the houſe of the mighty, when they grow to be proud; and eſtabliſh the borders of the widowes and weake ones, when they ſhew themſelues humble.

Verſ. 26. *The thoughts of the wicked are abomination to the Lord: but the pure haue pleaſant words.*

THE *thoughts of the wicked*] Their deſires, affections, purpoſes, imaginations, and all the motions of their mindes: [*are abomination to the Lord*] ſuch as hee preſently beholdeth with deteſtation, and hereafter will puniſh with great ſeuerity: [*but the pure*] godly men, whoſe hearts are purified by faith, and which are vpright in their waies, [*haue pleaſant words*] they ſpeake ſuch things as are iuſt and acceptable in the ſight of God, and good and profitable for the vſe of the hearers.

The oppoſition ſtandeth thus: The thoughts of the wicked,

ked, and therefore alſo their words are abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure, and conſequently their thoughts are pleaſant vnto him.

Verſe 27. *He that is greedie of gaine, troubleth his houſe: but he that hateth gifts, ſhall liue.*

HE *that is greedie of gaine*] Which being diſcontented with his portion, doth rauenouſly couet after more wealth: [*troubleth his houſe*] ſubuerteth his owne eſtate, and draweth miſery vpon his houſhold and poſterity: [*but he that hateth gifts*] not that all receiuing of gifts is ſinne, for inferiours may take that which ſuperiours beſtow vpon them in mercy: and ſuperiours may accept of that which inferiours preſent them with kindneſſe: but bribes are heere ſpoken againſt, which are offered either to peruert iudgement, or to buy iuſtice: whereas the former ought not to bee yeelded vnto for the greateſt ſummes of money; and the latter ſhould be granted without the leaſt reward. And here is a *Synechdoche*, one thing being propoſed for a paterne of many others of like nature. The Magiſtrates dutie is ſet for an example of all others, and gifts for all manner of vnlawfull gaine and gettings [*ſhall liue*] ſafely and comfortably in this life, and gloriouſly in the life to come. This is the oppoſition: Hee that is greedy of gaine, and loueth gifts, bringeth trouble to his houſe, and ſhall die: but he that hath a contented mind, and hateth gifts, bringeth peace to his houſe, and ſhall liue.

Verſ. 28. *The heart of the righteous ſtudieth to anſwere: but the mouth of the wicked babbleth out euill things.*

A Good man, out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good things. He meditateth what to ſpeake, that he may vtter ſuch matter as is moſt wholeſome and profitable: and that not onely when a queſtion is demanded of him, or he is otherwiſe ſpoken vnto; but vpon any other occaſion, when it concerneth him to ſay ought: For the word [*anſwere*]

[*anſwere*] is more largely taken ſomtimes in the Scriptures then we vſe it in our common ſpeech, as Mat. 11. 25. *At that time Ieſus anſwered and ſaid, I giue thee thankes, O Father, Lord of heauen and earth*, &c. [*but the mouth of the wicked bableth out euill things*] he can neither be ſilent, nor ſpeake well; but is full of diſcourſe, and alwaies pratling raſhly, vainly, offenſiuely, and leaudly.

The oppoſition ſtandeth thus: The heart of the righteous ſtudieth to anſwere, and therefore he vttereth things that bee good: but the mouth of the wicked is haſtily & raſhly ſet on worke, and therefore he bableth out things that are euill.

Verſ. 29. *The Lord is farre off from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.*

THE *Lord is farre off from the wicked*] Hee is neere vnto them in his eſſence, whereby he filleth heauen and earth: and in his preſence, whereby he beholdeth their hearts, and all their waies: and in his iuſtice, being at hand to puniſh them. But he is farre off in reſpect of his fauour and helpe: yea euen then when they pray vnto him in their manner: ſo that they get no more good thereby, then if they ſhould call vpon one that is in another countrey. Vpon which occaſion the Prophet exhorteth men to *ſeeke the Lord while hee may be found, and* [*to*] *call vpon him while he is neere.* The cauſe thereof may be gathered out of the eighth verſe of this chapter, where *the ſacrifice of the wicked* is ſaid to bee *abomination to the Lord.* Who would willingly come nigh to that which he much abhorreth? Who would not keep off from ſmelling of noyſome ſents, or looking on loathſome ſights? [*but hee heareth the prayer of the righteous*] accepteth of it, and yeeldeth to it: is well pleaſed with that which they offer to him, and granteth that which they deſire of him. Eſa. 55. 6.

This is the oppoſition: The Lord is farre off from the wicked, and reiecteth their prayers: but he is neere to the righteous, and heareth their petitions. See what hath been ſpoken to this point in the eighth verſe.

Verſe

Verſ. 30. *The light of the eye reioyceth the heart: and a good hearing maketh the bones fat.*

THE *light of the eyes*] The beholding of delightful aſpects [*reioyceth the heart*] bringeth ſound gladnes to the ſoule that is ſeaſoned with grace, and looketh on Gods fauor, with his bleſſings: [*and a good hearing*] where there is comfortable matter related, and an attentiue eare to hearken vnto it: [*maketh the bones fat*] procureth health, and good diſpoſition of the whole body: by meanes whereof the bones are repleniſhed with marrow within, and well ſtored with fleſh and fatneſſe without: not that ſeeing ſerueth onely for the comfort of the heart, and hearing for the health of the body; but each of them is profitable both waies. And the ſame may bee vnderſtood alſo, in due proportion, of the other ſenſes.

Verſ. 31. *The eare that heareth the correction of life, ſhall lodge among the wiſe.*

THE *eare that heareth*] The perſon which encline th his eares, together with his heart, and yeeldeth obedience [*to the correction of life*] to wholeſome reproofes, whereby wee are taught to liue wel, and directed to life eternall, [*ſhall lodge among the wiſe*] ſhall bee wiſe, and receiue the reward of wiſedome, as a domeſticall companion, and fellow ſeruant with other wiſe men in the familie and houſhold of God.

Verſ. 32. *He that refuſeth inſtruction, deſpiſeth his own ſoule: but he that obeyeth correction, poſſeſſeth his owne heart.*

HE *that refuſeth inſtruction*] Which diſdaineth to bee admoniſhed of his faults, and directed in his waies, [*deſpiſeth his owne ſoule*] dealeth as hardly with his owne ſoule, in bringing ſhame and deſtruction vpon it, as if it were a thing that he deſpiſed, and were a mortall enemie vnto: [*but he that obeyeth correction*] which liſteneth vnto, and is guided by whole-

wholeſome leſſons, whether ſharpe or gentle, [*poſſeſſeth his owne heart*] hath the vſe and ordering of his mind, and whole ſoule, and preſerueth it from the power of death and damnation.

The oppoſition is this: He that refuſeth inſtruction, deſpiſeth his owne ſoule, and caſteth it away; but he that obeyeth correction, regardeth his heart, and poſſeſſeth it.

Verſ. 33. *Before the feare of the Lord goeth the inſtruction of wiſedome: and before honour goeth humility.*

BEfore the feare of the Lord] Before a man bee truly religious and godly, [*goeth the inſtruction of wiſedome*] he muſt be daily informed in the precepts and doctrine of Gods holy will expreſſed in the Scriptures: [*and before honour*] either that celeſtiall glory which is prepared for Gods people in the life to come, or any comfortable aduancement in this life, or the vndoubted note and credit of vnfained faithfulneſſe and pietie, [*goeth humility*] ſuch as is not counterfeit, and meerely in ſhew, but proceedeth from feeling of corruptions, and ſight of ones owne vnworthineſſe, whereby hee is induced in the meekeneſſe of his mind, to eſteeme others better then himſelfe. The word ſignifieth properly, in reſpect of the deriuation of it, ſuch a kind of lowlineſſe as is wrought by afflictions, though it be alſo ſometimes more largely taken. Now it is to bee enquired, what connexion there is betweene this clauſe and the former, which will eaſily be found if wee obſerue that the vertue and reward here laſtly mentioned, depend vpon the dutie and grace in the former place ſpecified: for with inſtruction there is required humility, and to the feare of God there is adioyned honour.

CHAP.

CHAPTER. XVI.

Verse 1. *The preparations of the heart are in man: but the answere of the tongue is from the Lord.*

IT is farre from the meaning of the holy Ghost, to ascribe here freewill to man, as though hee had any absolute power to dispose of his owne heart, though by concession, according to the vulgar opinion, that seeme to be granted: for no man can thinke an euill thought without Gods prouidence, much lesse a good thought without his grace: but the drift is to shew, that albeit men deuise much, and haue whole *armies* (as the word signifieth) of cogitations in their mindes, and those placed in exact order, as it were in battell array, so that they set downe with themselues both what and how to speake, yet [*the answere of the tongue is from the Lord*] they shall vtter that which God appointeth, and not alwaies what themselues doe purpose.

Verse 2. *All the waies of a man are cleane in his owne eyes: but the Lord pondereth the spirits.*

ALL *the waies*] The purposes, courses, and proceedings: the deedes that are done, the words that are spoken, and the thoughts that are conceiued [*of a man*] of him that is vnregenerate, and hath an ignorant minde, a proud heart, and a sleepie conscience, [*are cleane in his owne eyes*] seeme commendable vnto him: he iustifieth and applaudeth himselfe in them: [*but the Lord pondereth the spirits*] searcheth narrowly, not onely into the behauiour, but the hearts also of all men, as it were putting them into the ballance, and examining them by number and weight, whether they be pure and vpright, as proceeding

ceeding from ſinceritie; or prophane and hypocriticall, as growing from corruption and guile.

Verſe 3. *Commit thy workes vnto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be directed.*

THe word which wee tranſlate [*commit*] ſignifieth to deuolue or role, meaning thereby that is chiefly to bee reſpected in euery thing that any man doth deale in: by taking direction from his word, both for matter and manner: by propoſing a right end, euen his glorie, in the performance of it: by asking his helpe, and waiting on his hand, as well for ſucceſſe as recompence: *and thy thoughts ſhall be directed*, thy minde ſhall be informed in the right way: thy heart ſhall be confirmed to proceed on with cheereſulneſſe, and thou ſhalt be lead with a ſpeciall guidance to thinke vpon thoſe meanes which will bee moſt effectuall for the accompliſhing of thy deſire, if it be for his praiſe, and thy good to haue thy deſire accompliſhed.

Verſ. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for his owne ſake: yea euen the wicked for the day of euill.*

THe *Lord hath made all things*: By making is vnderſtood as well that workmanſhip which was beſtowed vpon all the creatures for their forme and exiſtence, as the workes which hee daily doth in his perpetuall gouernment and adminiſtration: *for his owne ſake*, for his glorie, which is ſeene in his wiſedome and power, in his mercie and righteouſneſſe, with all other holy attributes. And this hee doth not onely propoſe to himſelfe, as an end that were meete, and to bee wiſhed, but commandeth and cauſeth, as an effect that is neceſſarie and certaine: *euen the wicked againſt the day of euill.* This clauſe is annexed, as a preuention of an obiection that might ariſe out of the former words: How truly may it be ſaid that hee hath made all things for himſelfe, when reprobates, both men and Angels, continuallie ſet themſelues againſt

him? Now to this he answereth, that he getteth no small honour by them that are most vngodly and wicked: for sithence they refuse to yeeld him glorie by their life, and to acknowledge his goodnesse in the time of their prosperitie, hee will glorifie himselfe by their death, and manifest his iustice in the day of their destruction. And to that damnable estate they are fore-ordained by Gods righteous decree, as it is intimated here, and expresly affirmed in other places, and yet made worthie of it by their owne vnrighteous behauiour: as is noted in *Pharaoh*, and other obstinate rebels.

Verse 5. *All that are proud in heart, are abomination to the Lord:* though *hand* ioyne *in hand, he shall not be vnpunished.*

ALL] All sorts and degrees of men, male or female, yong or old, high or low, and euery particuler person, of what condition soeuer, *that are proud in heart*, whose hearts are loftie, and void of humilitie; and the heart is therefore specified, because pride is seated in it, and floweth from it, and that no man should challenge to himselfe any immunitie from the wretched estate of the proude, vnlesse his heart bee seasoned with humilitie. He that hath an high minde, though he beare a low saile, and keepe a small port, without pompe and brauerie, may bee as loathsome in the eyes of the Lord, as some others that set foorth themselues with greater shewes. Yet note that hee saith not, all that haue pride in their hearts, for who can be fully freed from it so long as hee is cloathed with mortalitie? but they that are proud in heart, and so bee none that vnfainedly feare God; for that manner of speech intendeth the habit or dominion of pride, which is onely in the vnregenerate: *are an abomination to the Lord*, hee hath them in detestation, and cannot abide them: *though hand ioyne in hand*, notwithstanding that they vnite their forces, and combine themselues together for their defence and saferie, *be shall not be vnpunished*, not one of them shall escape the strokes of God, though for a time he deferre his iudgements.

Vers. 6.

Verſ. 6. *By mercie and truth ſhall iniquitie be purged: and by the feare of the Lord men depart from euill.*

BY *mercie*] That kindneſſe and free loue which the Lord beareth to his elect, [*and truth*] the faithfull accompliſhment of his promiſes (and in the ſame ſenſe are the ſame words taken in Chapter 14.8.22. *To them that thinke on good things ſhall be mercie and truth*) [*iniquitie ſhall be purged*] as well originall guilt as actuall tranſgreſſions, and all that is amiſſe in the nature, and hearts, and waies of Gods choſen, ſhall be remitted and waſhed away through the blood of Ieſus Chriſt. That this is the meaning of this ſentence, it appeareth by the force of the word, that ſignifieth to make expiation, which properly belonged to Chriſt to doe, though typically the Prieſts of the law were ſaid to expiate by the ſacrifices which they offered. For hee (as S. *Iohn* witneſſeth) which is our Aduocate with the Father, is likewiſe the propitiation for our ſinnes: [*and by the feare of the Lord*] the knowledge of his will, the reuerence of his Maieſtie, and the regard of his fauour, [*men depart from iniquitie*] they decline from wicked waies, and doe thoſe things which are lawfull and good. Yet neither of them are in full perfection, though both of them in ſinceritie and truth. So that he declareth the cauſes of iuſtification in the former clauſe, and the exerciſe of ſanctification in the latter: ſhewing by whom ſins are pardoned, in the one; and to whom the aſſurance thereof pertaineth, in the other. 1. Ioh 2.2.

Verſ. 7. *When the Lord is pleaſed with the waies of a man, he will make his enemies at peace with him.*

WHen *the Lord is pleaſed with the waies of a man*] Whē any perſon leadeth a holie and righteous life, with faith and integritie, according to the rule of his word, [*he will make his enemies at peace with him*] hee will cauſe his aduerſaries to lay aſide their hatred, and beare good will to him, and deale friendly with him.

This commeth to paſſe often, but not alwaies: neither would the holy Ghoſt haue it taken for a perpetuall rule; for how then ſhould that be verified which our Sauiour told his Diſciples, that *they ſhould be betrayed of their parents, and brethren, and kinſmen, and friends, and be hated of all men for his names ſake:* which wee ſee vſually come to paſſe alſo in our times: But this is the beſt meanes to reconcile them vnto vs, and winne their loue either ſooner or later, as experience diuers times declareth. And this procureth protection from God, though malice bee nothing diminiſhed in them. And this may occaſion them now and then to doe vs a good turne in a fit, as the Egyptians did to the Iſraelites; or before they are ware, as *Haman* did to *Mordecai*, though they beare no good affection to vs.

Luke 21.16.

Verſ. 8. *Better is a little with righteouſneſſe, then great reuennes without equitie.*

BEtter, more comfortable and profitable *is a little*, ſmall ſubſtance or maintenance *with righteouſneſſe*, when the man himſelfe is iuſt and godly, and his poſſeſſions are well gotten and vſed, *then great reuennes*, either a large ſtocke, and ſtore of money, or any kind of riches, or lands, or penſions, or commings in, whatſoeuer, *without equity*, which are vniuſtly come by, vnrighteouſly kept, or vnlawfully ſpent.

Verſ. 9. *The heart of a man purpoſeth his way: but the Lord directeth his ſteps.*

MAny deuices, intents, and reſolutions are in the minds of men: *but the Lord directeth his ſteps*, his prouidence cauſeth their determinations either to proceed and take effect, (when they intend to doe that which he hath decreed to haue done) or elſe to be ſtayed and hindred, when they purpoſe to themſelues thoſe things which hee hath not appointed. And becauſe the whole courſe of mans actions is reſembled to a way, he therefore doth call all his particular proceedings therein, his ſteps.

Verſe.10. *A ſage ſentence ſhould be in the lips of the King: his mouth ſhould not tranſgreſſe in iudgement.*

A *Sage ſentence*] The word ſignifieth a diuination, being vſed very often in the euill part for the predictions of the Soothſayers and Aſtrologers, and ſo is forbidden in the Law, Deut.18.10. And ſometimes in good part, as Iſai. 3.2. *The Lord will take from Ieruſalem the ſtrong man, and the man of warre, the Iudge and the Prophet, the Diuiner or prudent man* (who by obſeruation of cauſes can foreſee what effects are like to follow) *and the aged.* And in Micah.3.6. there is a threatning that night and darkneſſe (meaning Gods iudgements vpon their minds, or bodies, or both) ſhall keepe them from viſion and diuination. And ſo heere it is preſcribed as the Kings dutie, and commended as his vertue, and not reproued as his fault. And hereby is intimated, that a wiſe equall manner of proceeding in all cauſes *ſhould be in the lips of the King* in the words and ſayings of the Ruler, and ſoueraigne Gouernour, and of the ſubordinate Magiſtrates vnder him, who are deputed to ſupply his place for him: *his mouth ſhould not tranſgreſſe in iudgement:* neither he nor they ought to paſſe or award any vniuſt ſentence, or otherwiſe vtter vnrighteous ſpeeches, but deale vprightly towards euery man in euery matter. *Keſem.*

Verſ.11. *The weight and ballance of iudgement are of the Lord: all the weights of the bag are his worke.*

THE *weight and ballance of iudgement*] Iuſt, euen, and equall meaſures, and all vpright and faithfull dealing in euery reſpect, *are of the Lord*, commanded and appointed by him, according as it is ſaid in the Law, *Thou ſhalt haue a right and iuſt weight; a perfect and a iuſt meaſure ſhalt thou haue, that thy daies may bee lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee. For all that doe vnrighteouſly are abomination to the Lord thy God.* [*all the weights*] the great and the ſmall, and of the middle ſize *of the bagge*, which men vſe Deut.25.15.16.

to put into the bag for the better and safer keeping of them, [*are his worke*] his ordinance, found out and inuented by his speciall prouidence and direction, and warranted by his word, for the benefit of humane society, and preseruation of equitie in the trafficke of one man with another. Heerein is a secret admonition contained by consequence, that no man peruert them to fraud and deceit, because that man is not onely thereby damnified, but Gods owne ordinance is thereby violated.

Vers. 12. *It is an abomination for Kings to commit wickednesse: for the throne is established by iustice.*

IT *is an abomination*: An horrible and loathsome thing, wherewith the Lord is highly displeased, *for Kings*, for great and mighty men, and Magistrates of euery degree, *to commit wickednesse*, to walke in impious, vncleane, and vnrighteous waies: *for the throne*, their honour, and safety, and good estate euery way, *is established by iustice*, made firme, and continued the longer, by their faithfull and vpright behauiour towards God and their people. The former clause declaring what a grieuous crime it is for men in high place to be sinfull and euill, is confirmed in the latter, by a reason from the contrary effects, the safety and stability of their estates who duly minister iustice, and vprightly exercise vertue, intimating consequently that iniquitie and sinne will vndermine and ruinate the power and dignity of the greatest.

Vers. 13. *Righteous lips are the delight of Kings: and the King loueth him that speaketh right things.*

THe latter clause sheweth what is the sense of the former, that when it is said, *Righteous lips are the delight of kings*, is meant, that Kings and great personages will affect such as speake with truth, wisedome and faithfulnesse. This often commeth to passe, but oftener faileth, more mightie men fauouring flatterers and Sycophants, then such as are vpright

in

in their ſpeeches. And yet is there no vntruth in the ſentence, becauſe the purpoſe thereof is to ſhew what is done by ſome, and ought to be done by all. It is therefore giuen as a precept to Princes and ſuperiours, to make much of them that ſpeake plainely with iudgement and diſcretion: and an encouragement to ſubiects and inferiours, to vſe their lips ſo, with expectation of fauour thereby, if not from mighty men in the earth, yet from the Almighty God in heauen.

Verſ. 14. *The wrath of a King is as meſſengers of death: but a wiſe man will pacifie it.*

THE *wrath of a King*] His indignation, iuſtly and vpon due cauſe kindled againſt his ſeruants or ſubiects, [*is as meſſengers of death*] doth portend and threaten ſome great puniſhment, if not preſent death, to the parties with whom hee is offended, if they fall into his hands: [*but a wiſe man will pacifie it*] he will endeauour either by his owne meanes, fit opportunity being taken; or by mediation of others, who ſhal be better regarded, to aſſwage his anger.

Verſ. 15. *In the light of the Kings countenance is life; and his fauour is as a cloud of the latter raine.*

THE meaning of this ſentence is, that where the King and great perſonages do affect, and make manifeſt their loue, there is ioy, and credit, and protection, and preferment, and all ſuch proſperity as man may bee a meanes of: for ſo much the word [*life*] doth import: and the ſame is amplified by the two ſimilitudes of light ſome and comfortable ſun-ſhine, and of fruitfull and profitable ſhowers; eſpecially thoſe which they called the latter raine, wherby the ground was refreſhed after the drought and the corne was ripened before the harueſt. And yet are not all promiſcuouſly, without difference, in ſo happie an eſtate when ſuperiours doe ſet by them, vnleſſe the Lord doe alſo grace them: for mans friendſhip can neuer do good vnto Gods enemies, as may appeare by the condition

2.King.7.5. of *Doeg*, and of the noble man, vpon whom the King of Israel leaned; and of the Priests of *Baal*, whom *Iezabel* maintained; and of the false Prophets, whom *Ahab* respected.

Vers. 16. *How much better is it to get wisedome then gold? and to get vnderstanding is more to be desired then siluer.*

HOw much better] It is so farre better to seeke and finde heauenly wisedome, and the knowledge of God rather then gold, yea euen that which is fine and pretious, (as the Charuts. word importeth) and siluer, as that the ods and difference is inexplicable; the greatnesse of it cannot bee vttered; the one being of an heauenly nature, and the grace of Gods spirit; the other being earthly, and digged out of the ground: the one being durable, and euerlasting; and the other momentany and of no continuance: the one being peculiar and proper to good men; and the other common to all, and communicated to the worst sort: the one being a pledge and testimonie of Gods loue, and the other mingled many times with his indignation: the one standing to a man, and comforting him at death, and in all distresses; and the other failing him at his greatest need, and leauing him helplesse in the middest of his misery.

Verse 17. *The path of the righteous is to decline from euill: and he keepeth his soule that keepeth his way.*

THe path of the righteous] The wonted and most constant conuersation of all good men, that which they most desire and endeauour, [*is to decline from euill*] to abstaine from sin and iniquitie, and all that may allure thereunto: and contrariwise to performe, as farre as in them lieth, euery Christian dutie that is required at their hands: [*and he keepeth his soule*] he preserueth himselfe both soule and body from destruction, and all kind of plagues, [*that keepeth his way*] which ordereth his life aright, and walketh vprightly in obedience to Gods holy Commandements.

Vers.

Verſe 18. *Pride goeth before deſtruction, and an high minde before the fall.*

PRide goeth before deſtruction, &c.] That commonly commeth to paſſe, that before any great plague befall the wicked, they grow inſolent and preſumptuous, ſetting foorth themſelues ambitiouſly, and ſeeking vaine-glorie, in words and deeds, in geſtures or countenance: or at leaſt their hearts are lifted vp, as it is teſtified in the latter clauſe. And where either ſtately or ſtubborne behauiour, or an hautie minde do go before, there ſome notable iudgement of God will certainly follow after, vnleſſe humiliation and repentance come betweene.

Verſ. 19. *Better it is to be of an humble minde with the afflicted, then to diuide the ſpoyles with the proud.*

BEtter it is] It is more comfortable, more honourable, more profitable, more ſafe and eaſie, *to bee of an humble minde*, or as the Hebrew word is, *of an humble ſpirit*, not artificially in pride or policie to make ſemblance of humilitie, or onely by naturall diſpoſition to be leſſe ambitious then many others; but to haue the true habit of humilitie, being beautified and ſanctified with the grace thereof, *with the afflicted*, albeit wee ſhould be poore, or oppreſſed, or paſſe vnder any other croſſes, as many, and the moſt, and welneere all doe, or haue done, that are heartily humbled, *then to diuide the ſpoyles with the proude*, then to preuaile in our attempts, and get victories for glorie, and riches for ſtate, *with the proude*, in that manner, and with that minde, as violent and arrogant oppreſſors vſe to doe.

He alludeth to the winning and ſacking of Cities, and preferreth the condition of the people ſubdued, and ſpoyled of their ſubſtance, if they bee lowly, before the ſtate of the warriers conquering, and carrying away the wealth, if they bee puffed vp with pride.

Verſ. 20.

Verſe 20. *He that hearkeneth to the word, ſhall finde good: and bleſſed is he that truſteth in the Lord.*

HE *that hearkeneth to the word,*] Which applieth his eare, and minde, and heart to the ſacred word and doctrine of God, both written and preached, *ſhall finde good*, ſhall obtaine all ſuch graces for his ſoule, and bleſſings for his body, as may teſtifie Gods fauour towards him: *And bleſſed is he that truſteth in the Lord.* This latter clauſe is an explication of the former, ſhewing the good that is promiſed, to be bleſſedneſſe it ſelfe: a ſufficiencie of comfort and proſperitie in this life, and a full perfection of glorie and felicitie in the life to come: and the attention required to bee ſuch as is accompanied with faith, that the word bee not onely marked, but alſo beleeued; and God when he ſpeaketh, haue not only heed giuen to him, but confidence likewiſe repoſed in him.

Verſe 21. *The wiſe in heart ſhall be called prudent: and the ſweetnes of the lips ſhall increaſe Doctrine.*

THe *wiſe in heart*] He which is godly wiſe, and wiſe to ſaluation, who hath knowledge and ſinceritie mixed together in his ſoule, *ſhall be called prudent*, ſhall ſhew himſelfe, be knowne, and iuſtly commended, to be a iudicious and diſcreet perſon, both in the mouthes of godly men, and in the conſciences of wicked men, and by good effects at laſt in the ſight of all men: *and the ſweetnes of the lips ſhall increaſe knowledge.* The former part of the ſentence declareth what good the wiſe doe get by wiſedome; that they attaine to the vertue and praiſe of prudence: and in this latter, what good they doe by the ſame to others, which is ſpecified onely in their words, in their well-ſeaſoned and comfortable ſpeeches, called the ſweetnes of the lippes, that thereby groweth *increaſe of doctrine*, to euery attentiue and diligent hearer, both for admonition, inſtruction, conſolation, and euery other vſe, as opportunitie ſerueth.

Verſ. 22.

Verſ. 22. *Vnderſtanding is a wel-ſpring of life to them that haue it: but the inſtruction of fooles is follie.*

VNderſtanding] The true knowledge of Gods holie will *is a wel-ſpring of life*, a precious poſſeſſion, as fountaines were in thoſe countries; and a comfortable, conſtant, neceſſarie, and effectuall meanes of ſaluation, *to them that haue it*, whoſe mindes are ſoundly illuminated, and their hearts graciouſly ſeaſoned therewith: *but the inſtruction of fooles*, thoſe perſwaſions which ſinful men vſe, and that aduice which they giue in ſtead of inſtructions, *is follie*, corrupt and wicked for matter, and pernicious and hurtfull for effect.

Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: Vnderſtanding is a wel-ſpring of life to thoſe that poſſeſſe it, and therefore the counſell of wiſe men is wiſedome: and ignorance is the fountaine of death to them that are poſſeſſed of it, and therefore the inſtruction of fooles is follie.

Verſe 23. *The heart of the wiſe guideth his mouth aright, and addeth doctrine to his lips.*

THe heart of the wiſe] His knowledge and iudgement, his prudence and diſcretion, *doth guide his mouth aright*, direct him when to ſpeake, and when to hold his peace, & what to ſay, and what to conceale. His loue to goodneſſe induceth him to declare that which is good; and his hatred of naughtines doth cauſe him to refraine from all words that are naught: *and addeth doctrine to his lips*, miniſtreth matter of wholeſome leſſons for them to deliuer. It getteth knowledge, and keepeth it, and they being ſtored therewith, doe vtter the ſame for the inſtruction of others.

Verſe 24. *Faire words are as an hony combe: ſweetneſſe to the ſoule, and health to the bones.*

GOdly and comfortable ſayings rightly grounded on the holy Scriptures, and fitly applied to the vſe of wel-prepared

pared hearts, whether publikely or priuately, *are as an hony-combe, ſweetnes to the ſoule*, they bring great ioy and gladnes to an vpright heart, as hony or other ſweete things doe much delight the taſte, *and health to the bones*, are meanes of good to the whole bodie, for conſeruation of health, or reſtitution to it, by the cheerefulnes of the mind, and the fauour and bleſſing of God.

Verſ. 25. *There is a way that ſeemeth right to a man: but the iſſue thereof are the waies of death.*

THere is a way] An vngodly, but a common courſe of life, which all vnregenerate perſons doe take, *that ſeemeth right to a man*, wherein hee pleaſeth himſelfe: and being either blindfolded by luſt, or miſled by carnall reaſon, cuſtome, or companie, thinketh it not to bee very diſpleaſing to God, or dangerous to himſelfe: *but the iſſue thereof are the waies of death*, in the end it will bring them to deſtruction, toward which they haue been trauelling all their life time before. See chapter 12. verſe 15. and chapter 14. verſe 12. where the ſelfe ſame words haue been expounded.

Verſe 26. *The troubleſome perſon bringeth trouble to himſelfe, for his mouth doth recoile vpon himſelfe.*

THe troubleſome perſon] Which taketh a delight, and ſeeketh occaſions to moleſt others which haue done him no hurt, *bringeth trouble to himſelfe*, procureth his owne hurt or vexation of minde: *for his mouth recoileth vpon himſelfe*, his falſe or malicious ſpeeches, whereby hee diffameth his neighbours, or otherwiſe ſeeketh to work their ſorrow, turne to his owne ſhame and diſcredit, if not loſſe, or further puniſhment.

Verſe 27. *A wicked perſon diggeth vp euill, and in his lips is as it were burning fire.*

A Wicked perſon] A naughtie, leaud, and wicked man, *digeth vp euill*, ſecretly vnder hand layeth plots for the

ſubuerſion

ſubuerſion of his neighbours ſtate, whom hee maligneth, as pioners vndermine the foundations of cities or houſes: [*and in his lips is as it were burning fire*] he breatheth out pernitious and euill words, tending as much to the ruine and deſtruction of the parties againſt whom they are ſpoken, as fire kindling vpon an houſe doth to the conſumption both of the building, and ſtuffe that is in it.

Verſ. 28. *A froward perſon ſoweth ſtrife; and a tale-teller ſeparateth chiefe friends.*

A *Froward perſon*] *A man of frowardnes* (ſaith the original text) he that is giuen to vnquietneſſe, and to bee a buſie body, peruerting other mens words and waies, and nouriſhing peeuiſhneſſe and ſinfulnes in himſelfe, [*ſoweth ſtrife*] raiſeth contentions, and cauſeth debate betweene man and man, which agreed wel together before: [*and a tale-bearer*] a pickthanke, which vnder colour and pretence of loue doth ſecretly whiſper in mens eares, and maliciouſly informe them againſt their innocent and faithfull wel-willers, [*ſeparateth chiefe friends*] the word that often ſignifieth a Prince, a guide, or captaine, is ſometimes taken alſo for a principall friend, or, as we ſay, a Prince of friends, as heere and in the next chapter following, verſ. 9: and Pſalm. 55. verſ. 13. *It was thou, O man, euen my companion, my eſpeciall friend, and my familiar.* And *Micah 7.* verſ. 5. *Truſt yee not a friend, &c.* The meaning then is, that he ſetteth variance betweene thoſe that were inward together, and ſingularly affected one towards another.

Verſ. 29. *A wicked man deceiueth his neighbour, and leadeth him into a way that is not good.*

A *Wicked man*] He that is head-ſtrong, and wilfully giuen to tranſgreſſe the lawes of God, in regard whereof the originall text calleth him, *a man of violence*, [*deceiueth his neighbour*] infecteth the minds of thoſe with whom hee conuerſeth, his errours, perſwading them of the vnlawfulneſſe of that

that which is vnlawfull, and of safety where is perill; and that that is euill which is good and laudable, and sometimes necessary: [*and leadeth him into a way that is not good*] corrupteth his conuersation with vices, and draweth him vnto such courses as are both sinfull and hurtfull.

Vers. 30. *He shutteth his eyes to deuise wickednesse: hee moueth his lips, and bringeth euill to passe.*

HE] The wicked man formerly spoken of, [*shutteth his eyes to deuise wickednesse*] seriously setteth his mind vpon mischiefe, and would not haue his thoughts distracted and drawne away from it, by looking heere and there vpon any obiects; meaning that hee is very intentiue to inuent that which may doe hurt: [*he moueth his lips*] hee speaketh softly, and whispereth; he dealeth closely, & would not bee knowne in his practises, lest he should be preuented, [*and bringeth euill to passe*] by his industrie and secrecie doth many shrewd turns, and worketh much villanie.

Vers. 31. *The gray head is a crowne of glory, when it is found in the way of righteousnesse.*

THe gray head] Old age, whereof gray haires and a hoare head is a signe, [*is a crowne of glory*] yeeldeth commendation to the aged person, and maketh him reuerent, [*when it is found in the way of righteousnesse*] when the old man doth shew himselfe to be religious and righteous, whether hee hath led his life in that manner from his youth, or whether he hath bin conuerted to it now in his latter time.

Vers. 32. *He that is slow to wrath, is better then the mighty man: and he that ruleth his owne mind, is better then he that winneth a City.*

HE that is slow to wrath] Which will not bee prouoked to anger without due cause, neither hauing due cause to

be

bee angry, will passe the bounds of moderation and measure, [*is better then the mighty man*] is more to bee commended for his strength and fortitude, then he that is boisterous, & strong of body: [*and he that ruleth his mind*] which represseth and keepeth vnder his intemperate passions and violent affections of euery sort, [*is better then he that winneth a City*] hath greater power, and doth a more worthie exploit, then he which by force of armes doth ouercome and conquer whole Cities, Castles, and Countries.

Vers. 33. *The lot is cast into the lap: but the whole disposition thereof is of the Lord.*

THe lot] Which was much in vse among the people of God, both for diuision of lands, as Numb. 26. 55. and for other causes, as appeareth in many places of the Scriptures [*is cast into the lap*] into some secret or close place; & that which was most ordinarie with them, is put for many other, as hats, fists, pots, boxes, or whatsoeuer else: [*but the whole disposition thereof*] the particular ordering, guiding, and gouernment of of it, [*is of the Lord*] by his immediate prouidence, without either chance, art, or labour. And vnder lot he comprehendeth all other accidents which are thought to bee meerely casuall, and wholly subiect to fortune.

CHAPTER. XVII.

Vers. 1. *Better is a morsell of drie bread, and peace therewith, then a house full of sacrifices with strife.*

BEtter] More comfortable, safe, and wholesome, [*is a morsell of drie bread*] a crust (as wee vse to say) without any other cates or dishes, slender fare, a small pittance, and that also course and homely, [*and peace therewith*] if there be Christian loue, quietnesse, and good agreement, [*then an house full*

of

of ſacrifices] great abundance of dainty cheere, as they vſed to haue when they offered peace offerings, as may appeare chap. 7. verſ.14. And to that cuſtome S. *Iames* ſeemeth to allude, when he ſaith, *You haue nouriſhed your hearts as in a day of ſacrifice or ſlaughter.* Iam.5.5.

Verſ.2. *A diſcreet ſeruant ſhall haue rule ouer a leaud ſonne, and he ſhall diuide the inheritance among the brethren.*

A *Diſcreet ſeruant*] A faithfull, painefull, and wiſe ſeruant, though a bondman, [*ſhall haue rule ouer a leaud ſonne*] ſhall be preferred before a rude and diſſolute child, and ſometimes be ſet ouer him as a gouernour: [*and he ſhall diuide the inheritance among the brethren*] ſhall bee as one of them, and haue a portion among them, and bee as it were in the roome of the eldeſt brother, hauing the chiefe hand in making diuiſion of the goods and lands betweene the other ſonnes and daughters.

This indeed is ſometimes verified according to the letter and words of the ſentence, that ſeruants be made Executors to their maſters, and guardians to their maſters children: but the drift hereof is to ſhew, that they which are low may be exalted by vertue, & they which are high, may be brought downe by vice: that wiſdome preferreth diuers aboue them that might haue been their betters, and follie depriueth many of thoſe prerogatiues which otherwiſe they ſhould haue enioyed.

Verſ.3. *The fining pot is for ſiluer, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts.*

THe *fining pot for ſiluer*] Gold-ſmiths haue their veſſels, wherein they proue and trie the gold and ſiluer from droſſe and corruption: [*but the Lord trieth the hearts*] he alone ſearcheth them, and knoweth them; and none but hee by grace can purifie them, though man by art can refine metals, and make them more pretious.

Verſ.

Verſe 4. *The wicked man giueth heed to falſe lips: and a lyar hearkeneth to the naughty tongue.*

THe wicked man] He that is giuen to worke miſchiefe, [*giueth heed to falſe lips*] willingly liſteneth to the ſhrewd words that men that abuſe their lips to falſhood, doe ſpeake: [*and a liar liſteneth to the naughty tongue*] hee that is wont to tell lies, and other vngratious tales, is glad to heare lies, and other ſpeeches that are malicious and hurtfull.

Verſ. 5. *He that mocketh the poore, reprocheth him that made him: and he that reioyceth at his aduerſitie, ſhall not be innocent.*

HE that mocketh] Which offereth deſpite to, and vilifieth by word, deed, or geſture, whether in the way of ieſt, or bitter diſdaine, [*the poore*] not onely them that want wealth, but which are in any affliction, either externally, or in their ſoules, [*reprocheth him that made him*] doth after a ſort ſcorne and ſcoffe at God, who created the man, and allotted him that eſtate; as he that laugheth at the worke, doth conſequently deride the artificer, [*and he that reioyceth at his aduerſity ſhall not be innocent*] not onely he that ſheweth apparent contempt of the man afflicted, but which is glad in his heart for his miſery and affliction, ſhall ſeuerely be puniſhed.

Verſ 6. *Childrens children are the crowne of the elders, and the glory of the children are their fathers.*

CHildrens children] A long race, many nephewes, ſuch as we call grand-children, and thoſe of many deſcents, [*are the crowne of the elders*] a comfort and credit to their parents, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, &c. [*and the glory of the children are their fathers*] it is an honour for the younger ſort to haue deſcended from worthy progenitors; prouided yet in both theſe caſes, that as well the anceſtors as the poſterity be vertuous, & well adorned with graces of their owne. Many

fooliſh vitious children can nothing credit their wife & godly progenitors, as *Rehoboam* and his ſon added nothing to the glory of *Dauid* and *Salomon:* neither can ſinfull anceſtors either yeeld honour to, or receiue honour from their ſeed that is holy and religious. That bleſſed *Hezekiah* was in no ſort dignified by his wicked father *Ahaz:* nor was that wicked *Ahaz* any whit graced by his bleſſed ſon *Hezekiah*. And in caſe that both the elders and youngers, the fathers and children be all naught, as was curſed *Cham* and his ſeed, and cruel *Cain* and his, no multitude, nor might, nor meanes, of what ſort ſoeuer, can make either part honourable.

Verſ. 7. *Excellent ſpeech becommeth not a foole; much leſſe lying talke an ingenuous perſon.*

EXcellent ſpeech] Prayer, thankſgiuing, diſcourſe of God, of the Scriptures, of religion, of any holy things: the commendation of that which is good, the reproofe and diſpraiſing of that which is euill, [*becommeth not a foole*] is not ſeemly in the mouth of a ſinfull ſot, which neither practiſeth, nor loueth, nor vnderſtandeth the points whereof hee ſpeaketh: [*much leſſe lying talke*] any manner of corrupt communication, whether it be falſe or filthy, worldly or bitter, or ſcoffing, or idle; for one kind is put here for all the reſt: [*beſeemeth an ingenuous perſon*] is comely for a godly, wiſe, and honeſt man, ſuch a one as is contrary to the foole formerly mentioned, in profeſſion, heart, and behauiour, to vtter.

Verſ. 8. *A reward is as a precious ſtone; pleaſant in the eyes of him that hath it: it proſpereth whitherſoeuer it turneth.*

A Reward] A gift or preſent beſtowed vpõ a Magiſtrate, or officer, or any that may help or hinder a man in his cauſe, [*is as a precious ſtone, pleaſant in the eyes of him that hath it*] much regarded of him on whom it is beſtowed: [*it proſpereth whitherſoeuer it turneth*] it taketh effect, and bringeth good ſucceſſe, to what end ſoeuer it is applied; to eſcape puniſhmẽt,

to

to pacifie wrath, to obtaine promotion, to get ſauour in courts, to croſſe ones aduerſarie, or to bring to paſſe any purpoſe.

Verſe 9. *He that couereth a fault, ſeeketh loue: but hee that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth a chiefe friend.*

HE *that couereth a fault*] That paſſeth by an infirmitie, that burieth an offence, as much as may be, in ſilence, *ſeeketh loue*, by ſhewing loue to the partie, preſerueth concord where kindneſſe was before, and taketh the way to make him his friend, who was before but a ſtranger to him: *but he that repeateth*, which looketh too narrowly into euery ſlippe, and is raking into mens frailties, eſpecially ſo as to blaze them abroad to others, *ſeparateth a chiefe friend*, doth alienate the mindes of thoſe that bee deareſt vnto him, and maketh them his enemies. Yet it is not againſt the rule of loue to tell men louingly of their faults; for that helpeth them to repentance and reformation, and cureth their credits, the blemiſh thereof being wiped away both from the eyes of God and men, as Saint *Iames* ſaith: *If any of you haue erred from the truth, and ſome man hath conuerted him, let him know, that hee that hath conuerted the ſinner from going aſtray out of his way, ſhall ſaue a ſoule from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſinnes.* Iam. 5. 19. 20. Neither is it vnfit, but needfull ſometimes to acquaint others with the tranſgreſſions of our neighbours, if it belong vnto vs to bee their Phyſitians; as *Ioſeph* did *Iacob* with the infamie his brethren ranne into: and they of the houſe of *Cloe* did the Apoſtle with the contentions of the Corinthians. And in ſome caſes ſome mens ſinnes muſt needes be diſcouered, for the ſafetie of the whole ſtate, both of Prince and people, of Church and Common-weale: for it is a ſure rule, that no mans faults are then to be concealed when any man may take hurt thereby. See Chap. 10. verſ. 12.

Verſe 10. *A reproofe entreth more into him that hath vnderſtanding, then an hundred ſtripes into a foole.*

A *Reproofe*] A rebuke and admonition onely, though ſhort alſo, one word as it were, *entreth more into him that hath vnderſtanding*, worketh more vpon his heart, and taketh better effect for reformation of his faults, *then an hundred ſtripes into a foole*, then many grieuous puniſhments inflicted vpon a wicked perſon, which wanteth the ſound and ſauing knowledge of God.

The oppoſition is ſpecially betweene deſperate ſinners, giuen ouer vnto a reprobate ſenſe, and a godly man; notwithſtanding that Gods owne elect may alſo bee poſſeſſed with ſuch obſtinacie, til the time of their conuerſion: and then their miſeries, with the worke of Gods holy ſpirit, will helpe them to humiliation and repentance.

Verſ. 11. *An euill man ſeeketh onely rebellion: and a cruell meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him.*

A *N euill man*] He that is deſtitute of Gods holy ſpirit, and walketh after the fleſh, *ſeeketh onely rebellion*, ſetteth himſelfe whollie to tranſgreſſe the commandements of God, and delighteth in nothing ſo much as in that which is contrarie to his will: *and a cruell meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him*, euen as Kings and other Princes ſend out ſome forces (if neede ſo require) to ſuppreſſe rebellions, and to apprehend and ſeuerely puniſh the Rebels: ſo the Lord armeth ſometimes men with wrath and power againſt his enemies, and ſometimes the Angels, and ſometimes the vnreaſonable creatures, and ſometimes the inſenſible creatures, to bee as it were his officers, appointed to plague them without mercie, and ſometimes his owne hand immediatly doth deſtroy them.

Verſ. 12.

Verse 12. *Let a Beare robbed of her whelpes meete a man, and not a foole in his folly.*

THe she Beare, whose young ones haue been lately taken from her, exceedeth all other beasts in rage & fiercenes. From thence doth *Hushai* take his similitude concerning *Dauid: Thou knowest* (saith he to *Absalom*) *thy father and his men,* 2.Sam.17.8. *that they be strong men, and are chafed in minde, as a Beare robbed of her whelps in the field.* And from thence doth the Lord draw a comparison to expresse the grieuousnes of the plagues wherewith he purposed to punish the sinfull Israelites: *I will* Hos.13.8. *meete them as a Beare that is robbed of her whelps, and will breake the kall of their hearts.* And the immanitie of this beast may bee discerned by that which befell the wretched boyes which scoffed at *Elisha*, and were cursed by him. It is said, that *two Beares came out of the forrest, and tare in pieces two & forty of them.* 2.King.2.24. And yet it is not so dangerous to meete with such a Beare, *as with a foole in his folly*, as to fall into the hands of a wicked man in the extremitie of his wickednes and furie.

Vers.13. *He that rewardeth euill for good, euill shall not depart from his house.*

HE *that rewardeth euill for good*] That dealeth iniuriously and vnkindly with him that hath declared his loue in outward curtesies any way for his benefit and profit, whether by word or deede; or hath sought the saluation of his soule, by helping him against his sinnes, [*euill*] plagues and punishments from God, and many times displeasure from men also, [*shall not depart from his house*] from himselfe especially, and from his wicked posteritie.

Vers.14. *The beginning of strife is as he that openeth the waters: wherefore before the contention be medled with, leaue off.*

THe *beginning of strife*] The person which is the beginner of strife, he that giueth the onset thereunto, *is as he that*

openeth the waters, that diggeth downe the heads of ponds, or bankes of riuers, whereby the waters are held in; which being by this meanes let looſe, can neither be brought in againe, nor reſtrained from doing of hurt; but the breach increaſeth, and cannot eaſily bee ſtopped: and the ſtreame is violent, and cannot eaſily bee ſtaied: *Wherefore, before the contention be medled with, leaue off.*] If it be poſſible, let there be no beginning of ſtriſe; but if there be, withſtand the proceeding, and giue vp before the matter grow to heat, & the ſuit to charges.

Verſ. 15. *He that iuſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the iuſt, euen they both are abomination to the Lord.*

HE *that iuſtifieth the wicked*] Which either publikely or priuately doth either warrant the vnlawfull actions of ſinfull men, or cleereth them of the practiſe of that whereof they are guiltie, or freeth them from the puniſhments which their faults doe iuſtly require, *and he that condemneth the iuſt*, imputing thoſe things vnto them for faults, which indeed are vertues, or not at all any offences, (as they did to the Diſciples of Chriſt, for plucking, rubbing, and eating the eares of corne on the Sabbath day, which in that caſe might bee done without ſinne) or laying thoſe crimes to their charge, whereof they are innocent and faultleſſe: *they both are abomination to the Lord*, the one as well as the other is loathed and diſliked of him, and neither of them ſhall eſcape the iudgements which are to be executed by him.

Verſe 16. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a foole to buy wiſedome, ſeeing he hath no heart?*

WHerefore *is there a price in the hand of a foole*] Whitherto ſerueth it that a fooliſh wicked man hath wealth, time, and other meanes, *to buy wiſedome*, procure the knowledge of God, *ſeeing he hath no heart*, when hee hath neither wit, nor will to vſe them to that holy end? The meaning is, that a ſinfull man is nothing the better for all his riches,

ches, or whatſoeuer elſe he poſſeſſeth, if hee haue no affection or deſire to ſeeke and labour for ſound vnderſtanding.

Verſ. 17. *A friend loueth at all times, and a brother is borne for aduerſity.*

A *Friend*] He that is true and truſtie, [*loueth at all times*] is conſtant in good will, and ready alwaies to performe euery dutie of kindneſſe: [*and a brother*] a naturall and deere friend, and not euery naturall brother or kinſman, (for it is ſaid in the next chapter, verſ. 24. that *a friend is neerer then a brother*: and in the 19. chapter, verſ. 7. *All the brethren of the poore doe hate him*) *is borne for aduerſity*] then beginneth to ſhew himſelfe as if hee were new borne, when a man being in affliction hath moſt need of him.

Verſ. 18. *A man void of vnderſtanding clappeth the hand, taking vpon him ſuretiſhip before his friend.*

A *Man void of vnderſtanding*] An vndiſcreet and fooliſh perſon [*clappeth the hand*] giueth his word for another mans debt, and confirmeth the ſame by giuing his hand or writing, or other meanes, ſuch as whereby a promiſe is ratified: [*taking vpon him ſuretiſhip before his friend*] voluntarily, raſhly, and vnaduiſedly, being ready to offer himſelfe to this burthen before he be intreated thereunto.

Verſ. 19. *He that loueth ſtrife, loueth tranſgreſſion: and he enlargeth his gate that ſeeketh a breach.*

HE *that loueth ſtrife*] Which is not vpon neceſſitie drawne into contentions, nor through infirmitie ſometimes falleth thereinto, but taketh delight in brawles and controuerſies, [*loueth tranſgreſſions*] is ſurely a wicked man, and taketh pleaſure in ſinne, which is the cauſe of his vnquietneſſe; and likewiſe procureth many euils to enſue vpon debate and variance, which are the effects of his turbulent humour: [*and he*

inlargeth his gate that seeketh a breach] he that picketh quarrels, and is desirous to fall out with men with whom before he was at agreement, setteth open a wide doore to let in many mischiefes.

Verse.20. *He that hath a froward heart, shall not find good: and he that is peruerse in his tongue, shall fall into euill.*

HE *that hath a froward heart*] Which is not onely misled by ignorance, or subiect to faults by frailty, or ouertaken at some times by passions, but is giuen to bee wilfull and stubborne, his soule is in the power of frowardnesse: [*shall not find good*] shal obtaine no fauour or blessing from God, but iudgements and curses rather, both for his euerlasting state, and for his present condition, howsoeuer hee may seeme to possesse many earthly commodities: [*and he that is peruerse in his tongue*] which abuseth his tongue to swearing, lying, flattering, railing, filthinesse or any other leaud speaking, [*shall fall into euill*] shall feele and find in the end some heauie stroke of God to light vpon him.

Vers.21. *He that begetteth a foole, begetteth him to his owne sorrow: and the father of a foole shall haue no ioy.*

HE *that begetteth a foole*] The parents of those children which are destitute of wisdome and grace, [*begetteth him to his owne sorrow*] procure to themselues matter of griefe in the very generation of an vngratious seed: but feele the bitternesse of it when they find the frowardnesse and rebellion, and (it may be) the misery and euill end of such sinfull sonnes: [*and the father of a foole shall haue no ioy*] His meaning is not, that they which haue wicked children are without all comfort: for then the best men, as *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Iacob*, *Dauid*, and other excellent persons, should haue been altogether comfortlesse, hauing godlesse sons as well as godly: but they can haue no reioycing in such a wicked progenie, so long as they continue in their impiety and follie.

Vers.

Verſ. 22. *A ioyfull heart cauſeth good health: but a ſorrowfull mind drieth vp the bones.*

A *Ioyfull heart*] Eſpecially that which is refreſhed and made merrie with godly ioy, [*cauſeth health*] is many times as good as phyſicke and wholeſome medicines for the reſtoring of health to weake bodies, and keepeth the healthy in very good temper, by a certaine vitall vigor which it conueieth into them: [*but a ſorrowfull mind*] an heauie ſpirit, which is caſt downe without iuſt cauſe, or beyond iuſt meaſure, [*drieth vp the bones*] cauſeth the body to bee out of tune, and greatly diſeaſed, by conſuming the radicall moiſture, and filleth the bones with aches, and waſteth the marrow that is in them.

Verſ. 23. *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the boſome to peruert the waies of iuſtice.*

A *Wicked man*] Both the partie that hath the bad cauſe, and ſtandeth in it, and the vniuſt Iudge, or other corrupt Officers, that will bee induced to doe wrong, [*taketh a gift*] which the one hath prepared to giue, and the other knoweth to be brought, [*out of the boſome*] cloſely and priuily, that others diſcerne it not [*to peruert the waies of iuſtice*] to ouerthrow the right, and ſtop the courſe of Law, wherein (as in broad and high waies) the Magiſtrate ſhould walke without all partiality.

Verſe 24. *Wiſdome is in the face of him that hath vnderſtanding: but the eyes of a foole are in the ends of the earth.*

W *Iſedome is in the face of him that hath vnderſtanding*] The modeſt, lightſome, and amiable countenance of a diſcreet and vertuous perſon, and eſpecially the ſtayednеſſe of his eyes, declareth and publiſheth him to bee wiſe; [*but the eyes of a foole are in the ends of the earth*] his lookes and counte-

countenance bewray and diſcouer the leaudneſſe, follie, and ſottiſhneſſe that is within him, and namely the inconſtancie or wandring of his eyes, rouing hither and thither, as if hee would looke from one ſide of the land to the other.

Verſe 25. *A fooliſh ſonne is a vexation to his father, and a bitterneſſe to her that bare him.*

HIs contemptuous and diſobedient behauiour to his parents, and other leaud conditions, and (as it often falleth out) his vnhappie eſtate doth fill the hearts both of his father and mother with anger, and with great griefe and ſorrow.

Verſ. 26. *It is not good euen to condemne the righteous, nor to ſtrike ingenuous men for equity.*

IT *is not good*] but euill ann hurtfull [*to condemne the righteous*] to ſpeake againſt, or paſſe ſentence vpon harmeleſſe men with our lips; or ſo much as to cenſure them in our harts: [*nor to ſmite ingenuous men*] to puniſh well diſpoſed and faithfull perſons, whom the Scripture, in regard of the free ſpirit that is in them, whereby they are preſerued from the power and bondage of ſinne, and in regard of the dignitie that grace hath aduanced them vnto, doth call by the name of free men and Princes, as the word here vſed doth ſignifie, [*for equity*] either for ſhunning that which is vnlawfull and naught, or doing that which is commendable and good.

Verſ. 27. *He that hath knowledge, ſpareth his words: and a man of vnderſtanding is of a coole ſpirit.*

28. *Euen a foole, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wiſe: and he that ſhutteth his lips, prudent.*

HE *that hath knowledge*] Which is endued with ſound wiſdome, [*ſpareth his words*] holdeth in and keepeth backe vnneceſſarie and fruitleſſe ſpeeches: hee delighteth not in ſpeaking much, but in ſpeaking well: [*and a man of vnderſtanding*]

ſtanding] being both iudicious and godly, [*is of a coole ſpirit*] is moderate, and well ſtayed in his affections: not eaſily burſting forth into anger, but diligently taking heed of the heate of his hart, and thereby is able to bridle his tongue from multiplying of many and paſſionate words. [*Euen a foole when he holdeth his peace, is counted wiſe*] So excellent a thing it is to keepe ſilence in time and place, that euen a ſilly perſon and Idiot holding his tongue, is deemed wiſe, and taken for a diſcreet man, becauſe that by fooliſh babling hee bewraieth not his ignorance and follie.

CHAPTER. XVIII.

Verſe 1. *For his deſire* a man *will ſeeke, ſeparating himſelfe, and deale in euery matter.*

FOr *his deſire a man will ſeeke*] Euery man will apply his minde and endeauour to get that which he affecteth, *ſeparating himſelfe*, auoiding all the lets and impediments which are like to croſſe his deſire, *and will deale in euery matter*, hee will attempt all ſuch courſes as may ſerue for the accompliſhment of his purpoſe.

Verſe 2. *A foole is not delighted with knowledge, but in diſcouering his owne heart.*

A *Foole*] A wicked perſon deſtitute of grace and wiſdome, and yet highly conceited thereof, *hath no delight in vnderſtanding*, is not deſirous to be truly wiſe, and therefore regardeth as little the meanes whereby hee may attaine to wiſedome, *but in diſcouering his owne heart*, in ſhewing by word and deed, that follie and naughtineſſe which proceedeth out of his corrupt and wretched heart, nothing doth ſatisfie him, but that which is agreeable to his humours.

Verſ.

Verſ. 3. *When the wicked commeth, then commeth contempt, and with the vile man, reproch.*

WHen the wicked commeth] When any man becommeth wicked, and waxeth ſinfull, *then commeth contempt*, diſhonour and infamie follow faſt after him, his credit is growing into a conſumption, how great and many meanes ſoeuer he hath to vphold it: *and with the vile man reproch*, hee that is vicious, and by ill doing deſerueth ſhame, ſhall be ſure to haue ſhame & reproch of his companions: if men dare not ſpeake contemptuouſly to him, yet they will talke contemptibly of him, or though they ſhould be afraid to cenſure him in their words, yet they wil be bold to deſpiſe him in their minds.

Verſ. 4. *The words of an excellent mans mouth, are as deepe waters, the welſpring of wiſedome, is* as *a flowing riuer.*

THe words] The wholeſome and fruitful ſpeeches, *of an excellent mans mouth*, vttered by godly men, and ſuch as feare the Lord: for to them doth the holy Ghoſt vouchſafe the title of excellencie: as when *Dauid* ſaith in the Pſalmes, *My goodneſſe* extendeth *to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent.* And when *Salomon* ſaith in this book, *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour*, They *are* as *deep waters*, plentifull & copious, ſuch as faile not, nor can be drawne drie at any time. *The welſpring of wiſedome is like a flowing riuer*, their hearts feed their mouthes, and thereout, wiſe, holy, and fruitfull words flow abundantly, as a vehement ſtreame boyleth out of a rich fountaine.

Pſal.16.3.

Prou.12.26.

Verſ. 5. *To accept of the perſon of the wicked is not good, to ouerthrow the iuſt man in iudgement.*

TO accept of the perſon of the wicked] To free him from puniſhment, or to ſhew him fauour in a bad matter, for his power, parentage, kindred, friends, wit, wealth, gifts, acquaintance, or to regard any thing in him, without the cauſe, *is not good,*

good, but dangerous & hurtfull, it will draw downe the iudgements of God vpon thoſe Magiſtrates, or perſons whatſoeuer, which vſe ſuch partiality: and he ſpeaketh in this manner, becauſe there is a ſhew of wiſdome, and policy, for gaine & ſafety, by gratifying of them, in reſpect of the bribes which they will giue to haue their turnes ſerued, and the miſchiefe which they will worke to thoſe that proceed ſeuerely againſt them, *to ouerthrow the iuſt man in iudgement*, this is the effect that commonly enſueth vpon the fauor that is ſhewed to the wicked, & maketh the ſin double: in ſo much as vnrighteous malefactors are ſpared, ſo much the harmeleſſe and innocent are oppreſſed: that hand which lifteth vp him, whom it ought to beate downe, will beate downe him, whom it ought to lift vp. Either of theſe were great offences alone, but very grieuous when they are both conioyned together. It was a foule fault to ſeeke the releaſe of *Barrabas*, which had deſerued to die; but to haue him deliuered, that Chriſt might be crucified, was intollerable wickedneſſe: and yet it would haue been more notorious & deteſtable, if Chriſt had been condemned to die, by the practiſe and perſwaſion of *Barrabas*, which thing ſomtimes befalleth the members of Chriſt, by the inſtigation of the ſucceſſors of *Barrabas*. The *Shechemites* aduentured to do that which is here condemned, and therefore they felt the penaltie which here is threatned: they would ſet vp *Abimelech* to be king, becauſe he was of their blood, and ſlew the other ſons of *Gideon* for his ſake, and at his requeſt, but in the end they found *it not good to accept of the perſon of the wicked, and to ouerthrow the iuſt*: for they and their city were deſtroyed, for taking part with their wicked kinſman, and offering violence to the righteous children of *Gideon*. Iudg. 9. 45.

Verſ. 6. *A fools lips come with ſtriſe, and his mouth calleth for ſtripes.*

7. *The mouth of a foole is his owne deſtruction, and his lips are a ſnare for his ſoule.*

A *Fools lips come with ſtriſe* The wicked talke of a graceles foole, his railing, ſlandering, lying, backbiting, challenges,

ges, comparings, nipping, and girding, doe as directly tend to quarrels, or brablings, as if they had legges to goe vnto contention: which is especially to be vnderstood of them that be froward, proude, giuen to scoffing, and others of like nature and disposition: *and his mouth calleth for stripes*, the words of his mouth doe prouoke, and euen call for blowes, and punishments, by his desire vpon others, but by desert and effect vpon himselfe. *The mouth of a foole is his owne destruction*, his vnaduised and intemperate speeches bring his owne ouerthrow, *and his lips are for his soule*, that matter which his lips doe maliciously or rashly vtter, is an occasion and meanes to intrap him, to the hazard of his state, life, and saluation.

Vers. 8. *The words of the tale-bearer are as strokes, and they goe downe into the inward parts of the belly.*

THe words of the tale-bearer] The malicious accusations which whisperers doe secretly mutter against men behinde their backes, *are as strokes*, as wounds that are giuen by weapons: they doe them as much hurt by seeking their infamie, or trouble, or by alienating the mindes, and good opinions of their friends and neighbours from them, as if they had smitten them with a sword, *and they goe downe into the inward parts of the belly*: they are like vnto darts, wherewith men are dangerously wounded, piercing (as it were) into the very intrailes.

Verse 9. *Euen he that is negligent in his businesse, is brother to a waster.*

HE that carrieth himselfe slothfully in the workes of his calling, being without all care and endeuour to set forwards his affaires, *is brother to a waster*, is like to him that prodigally wasteth his substance, as if he were his owne brother, and shall as certainly, though it may be not so speedily, come to pouertie as he. For God yoketh them together as fit mates, with the same reproofes, with the same threats, and with the same

ſame puniſhments. Both are barren of all goodneſſe: both are forward to any euill exerciſe, and both ſhall be pinched with penurie and want. And as in ſundrie reſpects the one is like to the other, ſo it is obſeruable that the one taketh much contentment in the company and courſes of the other, with much familiaritie and frequencie.

Verſe 10. *The name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower: the righteous runneth to it, and is exalted.*

THe *name of the Lord*] His fauour ioyned with his mighty power, and faithfulnes towards his people, *is a ſtrong tower*, as a Fort or Caſtle of defence is, for the ſafetie of them that are within it: ſo hee preſerueth his from the violence of their aduerſaries, that would deſtroy or hurt them: *the righteous*, ſuch as be iuſt, and godly, and feare him, *runne vnto it*, depend vpon him, and by prayer, and confidence, commit themſelues to his protection, againſt Satan, ſinne, damnation, and all manner of dangers both of ſoule and body, *and are exalted*, ſo kept from the rage of troubles, and the reach of their enemies, as if they were taken vp into an high Turret, or ſet in ſome place aloft, which no enemie could either vndermine, or aſſault, or ſhoote vp vnto.

Verſe 11. *The ſubſtance of the rich man*, is as it were *his ſtrong citie, and as a high wall in his imagination.*

IN the former ſentence was declared wherein the godlie ſeeke for ſafetie, and finde it, and that is in the name of the Lord: and in this, wherein the wicked, eſpecially being wealthie, preſume of defence, but faile of it, and that is in their goods and poſſeſſions. For they ſeeme *a ſtrong citie*, which no dangers can vanquiſh, and *an high wall*, that no miſerie can ſcale and climbe ouer: but all is in their owne imagination, and nothing in truth: for they are weake and low, and vtterly void of power againſt any kinde of calamities.

Verſ. 12.

Verſe 12. *Before deſtruction the heart of a man is haughtie, and before glorie goeth lowlineſſe.*

Before deſtruction] Before ſome grieuous calamitie, whereby a man is as it were broken in pieces (as the word importeth) with miſerie, ſorrow, or ſhame, *the heart is haughtie*, the minde is puft vp with ſelfe-liking, and ſo groweth ſecure, and careleſſe, and *before glorie goeth lowlineſſe*, when a man is humble in his owne eyes, and thinketh baſely of himſelfe, and reuerently of others, and ſubmitteth himſelfe to Gods hand, to beare willingly whatſoeuer he ſhall impoſe vpon him, he is in the way to true honour, if hee bee not aduanced to preferment, yet hee ſhall be refreſhed with comfort, and inriched with graces.

Verſ. 13. *He that anſwereth a matter before he hath heard it, it is a folly and a ſhame to him.*

TO make anſwere, or replie to a ſpeech, or at all to ſpeake of any matter, before a man hath throughly heard, and fully informed himſelfe therein, is a raſh and indiſcreete part, and the euill conſequents thereof, cannot but redound much to his diſcredit. For abſurdities will neceſſarily inſue vpon it, and can by no meanes be auoided, whereby he declareth himſelfe to bee failing of that wiſedome, and iudgement, which bring praiſe and eſtimation. And is it not moſt commonly an occaſion and meanes that good cauſes haue bad ſucceſſe, as being peruerted by the ignorance & temeritie of thoſe which take vpon them the defence of that whereof they haue not ſufficient information, or elſe are depraued vniuſtly by the haſte and headineſſe of ſuch as ſpeake euill of the things which they know not?

Verſ. 14. *The ſpirit of a man will beare out his infirmities, but a wounded conſcience who can beare?*

The ſpirit of a man] His heart being in a comfortable eſtate by the ſight of Gods fauour, and the teſtimony of a good con-

conſcience, *will beare out his infirmities*, maketh him to ſuſtaine with patience, and ſome cheerfulnes, manifold paines and diſeaſes of the body, and all outward croſſes whatſoeuer: *but a wounded ſpirit who can beare?* but when the ſoule is caſt down, and as it were broken with the apprehenſion of Gods indignation, none can endure the horror and anguiſh thereof, nor any thing raiſe it vp, and giue comfort to it, but God alone.

Verſe 15. *The heart of the prudent poſſeſſeth knowledge, and the eare of the wiſe will ſeeke after vnderſtanding.*

THE *heart of the prudent poſſeſſeth knowledge*,] He that is acquainted with the ſtate of his owne ſoule, and diſcerneth how precious and fruitfull, and needfull vnderſtanding is, will not content himſelfe to haue wiſedome in his eares, or head, or lippes, but layeth it vp in his heart, as his chiefe treaſure, *and the eare of the wiſe ſeeketh after vnderſtanding*: he laboureth to increaſe knowledge and grace, adding dailie thereunto, by hearkening as much as he may, to all ſound and wholeſome inſtructions.

Verſ. 16. *The gift of a man inlargeth him, and leadeth him before great men.*

THE *gift of a man*] Not the good qualities that are in him, and the graces which hee hath receiued, but the preſent that he bringeth, and the reward that he beſtoweth, *inlargeth him, and leadeth him before great men*, maketh roome for him, and procureth him acceſſe to the preſence of them that are in high places, & of great authoritie, from whom alſo he getteth countenance & fauour, whether his ſuit be equall, or vnlawful.

Verſe 17. *He that is firſt in his owne cauſe is iuſt: then commeth his neighbour and maketh inquirie of him.*

HE *that is firſt in his owne cauſe*] He that is in a controuerſie, ſpeaketh firſt, before the Magiſtrate, arbitrator, or any

other to whom it belongeth to heare the matter, *is iust*, so pleadeth for himselfe, and setteth such colours vpon his cause, that hee seemeth to be very righteous: if hee be plaintiffe, that his informations be equall, and waighty; if defendant, that his apologie is good, and he innocent. Yet is not this to be vnderstood of euery one that hath the first place of speech: for righteous men doe many times begin the declaration of the the cause, or defence of themselues, and be found vpright and faithfull both in the entrance and end of the strife: but it is meant of false fellowes, that respect not what they may warrantably auerre with truth, but what they can audaciously affirme with impudencie. *Then commeth his neighbour, and maketh inquirie of him*, he that in the second place, or afterwards is to make answere vnto him, or reply vpon him, confuteth his allegations, detecteth his falsehood, and conuinceth him, of indirect and naughtie dealing.

Vers. 18. *The lot causeth contentions to cease, and maketh a partition amongst the mightie.*

HE declareth the true & right vse of a lot, by telling what is done, for that which ought to be done: namely, in difficult and doubtfull causes, which cannot otherwise bee well determined, and where in diuision men cannot agree between themselues what part euery one should haue, that then they be satisfied with that which the Lord by lot doth after a sort, award vnto them. And hee maketh speciall mention of the *mightie*, that it serueth to compound their controuersies, because that when they contend, by reason of their power, and strength, & stout stomacks, they greatly damnify one another.

Vers. 19. *A brother offended* is harder to winne *then a strong citie: and their contentions are like the barre of a palace.*

A *Brother*] A natural brother, a neere kinsmã, a kind friend, *offended*, alienated by wrongs receiued, or imagined to be done vnto him, from him whom hee so much affected before,

fore, *is harder to winne then a ſtrong city*, will with more difficulty be brought to firme and vnfained reconciliation, then a city well defenced, can be vanquiſhed and taken. *And their contentions*, their ſtrife, and ſuites, *are like the barre of a Palace*, ſtrong, and vehement, and muſt with no leſſe adoe be be pacified, whiles their power ſerueth them to purſue one another, then the mighty iron barres, whereby the gates of a Caſtle, Fort, or great building, are ſhut in, and kept ſafe, may bee broken, or cut in ſunder. But this is to bee vnderſtood of vnregenerate and fleſhly men, or of Gods ſeruants ſo farre as they be carnall, and not otherwiſe: for it is a commendation that is giuen to the godly, by Saint *Iames*, that their *wiſedome* which they receiue *from aboue*, maketh them *peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be intreated*. Iam. 3. 17.

Verſ. 20. *With the fruit of a mans owne mouth ſhall his belly be ſatisfied: and with the encreaſe of his lips ſhall he be filled.*

WIth *the fruit of a mans mouth*] With thoſe words which the mouth of a man vttereth, be they good or bad, as the tree yeeldeth her fruit, be it ſweet or ſower, *ſhall his bellie be ſatisfied*, he ſhall be as it were fed with ioy, or ſorrow, *and with the encreaſe of his lips*, according to thoſe ſpeeches which the lips vſe moſt to deliuer, wholeſome, or hurtfull, as the ground ſendeth forth her crop of corne or weeds, *ſhall hee be filled*, he ſhall either haue great welfare, or great woe, many bleſſings, or many iudgements.

Verſ. 21. *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, as euery one delighteth to vſe it, he ſhall eate the fruit thereof.*

THis verſe in part containeth an explication of the former, ſhewing what is that *ſatisfying*, and *filling*, which is there mentioned, that it extendeth to all miſery, euen to the very death of the wicked, which abuſe their tongues to euill, and to all happineſſe euen to life it ſelfe, and that euerlaſting, (as is alſo meant of the contrary) of the godly, which vſe their

tongues aright, both which are said to be *in the power thereof:* that is, the peruerting, or well ordering of the same, is effectuall, either for destruction or saluation: and yet this force is not in the pronouncing of words, but in the affection from which they constantly proceed, and *as euery one delighteth to vse it. so he shall eate thereof.* Hypocrites somtimes doe make faire shewes, but their hearts and lips accord not together, and therfore their smooth speeches tend not to life: and godly men somtimes forget themselues, but they take not pleasure in euill speaking, and therefore they shall not be destroyed, though they may be corrected.

Vers. 22. *He that findeth a good wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth fauour of the Lord.*

HE *that findeth a good wife*] Which being himselfe a good man, hath, and seeth, and enioyeth the benefit of a good, wise, and faithfull wife, *findeth a good thing*, which shall bee for his helpe and comfort; *and obtaineth fauour of the Lord*, receiueth a testimony of his loue, in bestowing so great a blessing vpon him: and so doth a godly woman, that findeth a good and gratious husband.

Vers. 23. *The poore speaketh with supplications: but the rich answereth roughly.*

THE *poore*] He that is in misery, in perill, in feare, or subiection, *speaketh with supplications*, submissely, and lowly, to the wealthy and mighty, beseeching him in humble manner, and reuerent termes, especially when he hath any suite vnto them. *But the rich answereth roughly:* hee that hath abundance of goods, or is in authority, not onely reiecteth the poore petitioner contemptuously, with a churlish deniall, but otherwise also is proud and insolent in his speeches. Commonly thus it is, but yet not alwaies: for some of the lowest sort speake disdainfully, and some great personages behaue themselues courteously.

Vers.

Verſ. 24. *A man that hath friends, ought to ſhew himſelfe friendly, for a friend is neerer then a brother.*

A *Man that hath friends*] Which is beloued of, and receiueth fauours and benefits from others, *ought to ſhew himſelfe friendly*, to entertaine, hold, and requite their friendſhip by all good duties. Hee is not onely to take heed leſt by any ſtrangeneſſe, and offering of diſcourteſies, hee loſe their likings, but to endeauour by all ſignes and pledges of good will, to knit their harts faſter and faſter vnto him. *For a friend*, an vnfained wel-willer, which beareth Chriſtian affection vnto him whom hee loueth, is neerer then a brother, is more faithfull and conſtant in miniſtring helpe and comfort, then an ordinarie kinſman, or meere naturall brother.

CHAPTER. XIX.

Verſ. 1. *Better is the poore that walketh in his vprightneſſe, then he that peruerteth his waies, and is a foole.*

B *Etter is the poore*] More happie and comfortable is the eſtate of him that is of little wealth, and of ſmall poſſeſſions, and greater reſpect is to be had of him, *that walketh in his vprightneſſe*, endeauoureth conſtantly to bee iuſt and godly, in words and workes, *then he that abuſeth his lips*, then the rich that is giuen to ſpeake wickedly, *and is a foole*, voide of grace, and godly wiſedome, and full of vice and leaudneſſe. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: Better is the poore that vſeth his tongue aright, and walketh vprightly, and ſo is wiſe, then the rich that abuſeth his tongue, and walketh corruptly, and ſo is a foole.

Verſ. 2. *Both the mind without knowledge is not good, and he that haſteneth with his feet ſinneth.*

TWo vices are heere matched together, and reproued together, as dangerous and hurtfull, whereof the one is cauſe of the other, which are ignorance, and raſhneſſe. Concerning the former, it is ſaid, that *without knowledge*, where the ſound knowledge of Gods holy will is contemned, or neglected, *the mind is not good*, the man is not good. For a part is put for the whole: whatſoeuer ſhewes hee maketh of faithfulneſſe within, all is but deceiueable; his ſoule (as the originall Text hath it) is deſtitute of goodneſſe, and then, what is there in him, or proceedeth from him, that may bee called good? *and he that haſteneth with his feet, ſinneth.*

The latter is deſcribed by a ſimilitude, from him that ſhould headily run on blind-folded, and hood-wincked, in a perilous way, that he neither knoweth, nor euer ſaw: as ſuch a one is in danger to daſh againſt ſtumbling blocks, or to fall into quick-ſands, quagmires, mine-pits, brookes or ditches: ſo hee that vnaduiſedly, and without deliberation, attempteth and executeth matters of moment and importance, cannot auoide errours, and inconueniences, yea ſinnes and tranſgreſſions.

Verſ. 3. *The fooliſhneſſe of a man ouerthroweth his way, and his heart fretteth againſt the Lord.*

THe *fooliſhneſſe of a man*] The ſinfulneſſe and vngodly behauiour of the wicked, *ouerthroweth his way*, draweth croſſes and iudgements vpon him, and cauſeth him to haue ill ſucceſſe, *and his heart fretteth againſt the Lord:* though his tongue doe not openly blaſpheme, yet his heart doth ſecretly murmure againſt God, as if he were vniuſtly the cauſe of his calamities. Neither doth he this directly alwaies, and imbittereth himſelfe againſt the perſon of the Lord, but ſcorneth at his hand, and accuſeth his proceedings, vnder the name of chance,

chance, and ill lucke, and bad fortune, and many times religion is exclaimed vpon, and profeſſion quarrelled at, eſpecially if religious profeſſors diſlike of his irreligious prophaneneſſe, do thriue and proſper, when he is plagued and puniſhed.

Verſ. 4. *Riches gather many friends, but the poore is ſeparated from his neighbour.*

Riches gather many friends] Wealth encreaſed, encreaſeth the number and heape of ſuch as pretend good will, and draweth daily new friends. The perſons of men doe not this, nor their graces, but their riches. They make many fetches, they haue many geſtures, they vſe many words, and all this while their hearts are fixed on the goods, as flies ſeeke where honie is, and mice and rats will haunt an houſe where foode is to be gotten. So that their loue is to the money, or other ſubſtance, though they make ſemblance of good affection to the man. *But the poore is ſeparated from his neighbour*, hee that is needie or afflicted, or in diſgrace, is forſaken of all his carnall friends and companions, they either turne from him as a ſtranger, or againſt him as an enemie.

Verſ. 5. *A falſe witneſſe ſhall not be vnpuniſhed, and a forger of lies ſhall not eſcape.*

A falſe witneſſe] Either he that doth wittingly miſinforme the Magiſtrate, or any other gouernour, or he that by his vniuſt teſtimonie goeth about to confirme that which another hath vntruly ſuggeſted, *ſhall not bee vnpuniſhed*, but plagued either ſooner or late, with ſome temporarie penaltie of ſhame and miſery in this world, or with eternall perdition of ſoule and bodie in the world to come. *And a forger of lies*, which vſeth his tongue to falſhood, how artificially, & with what ſhewes and colours ſoeuer, though in priuate, *ſhall not eſcape*, ſhall not be alwaies free from puniſhment, though by flattering of himſelfe, hee thinketh the ſin not dangerous: and though by meanes of his wit, and preſent proſperity, hee ſeemeth able to preſerue himſelfe in ſafetie.

Verſ.6. *Many ſue to the face of the Prince, and euery man is friend to him that giueth gifts.*

Many ſue to the face of the Prince] They ſeeke the fauour and countenance of them that be in authority, eſpecially if they be alſo wealthy, & bountifull. He ſpeaketh not here in the commendation of them, as being loyall in loue, for conſcience, but for the reprehenſion of them, as being ſubmiſſe in ſhew, for commodity. *And euery man is friend to him that giueth gifts.* He declareth in this latter clauſe, the cauſe of that which he had affirmed in the former, why ſo *many ſue to the face of the Prince*, becauſe Princes haue moſt to beſtow, *and euery man*, euery carnall man for the moſt part *is friend*, would bee thought a friend to *him that giueth gifts*, that hee might be vſed as a friend, and haue gifts beſtowed vpon him.

Verſ. 7. *All the brethren of the poore doe hate him: how much more will his friends depart farre from him? Though he be inſtant in words, yet they will not.*

All the brethren] The whole kindred, euen they which are vnited with the neereſt bonds of nature; being yet carnall and vnnaturall, *of the poore*, of him that is decayed in his eſtate, or in diſgrace with ſuperiours, though neuer ſo vnworthily, *do hate him*, they loathe and deſpiſe him. *How much more will his friends depart from him?* Not they which were faithfully affected to him at any time, and bare him good will in truth, (*for a friend loueth at all times*, and *a friend is neerer then a brother*,) but ſuch his companions as diſſembled with him, making profeſſion and ſhew of loue in his proſperity for their owne aduantage, theſe in his aduerſity, *goe far from him*, caſt him off, and withdraw themſelues from him, as being aſhamed of his company, and vnwilling to take any notice of him, much more to deale in his cauſe, or to ſupply his wants. *Though he be inſtant in words*, albeit he heartily entreate, and earneſtly importune them for comfort, reliefe and fauour, *yet*

Prou.17.17. and 18.24.

they

they will not, they will not heare any requeſt or complaint that hee maketh, they will not befriend them in any matter of weight, wherein they may doe him good.

Verſ. 8. *He that poſſeſſeth his heart, loueth his owne ſoule: he keepeth vnderſtanding, to find that which is good.*

HE *that poſſeſſeth his heart*] Who hath his mind rightly informed with knowledge and iudgement, and orderly moderateth his deſires and affections, *loueth his owne ſoule*, hath a due care of himſelfe, and vſeth direct meanes for his ſaluation, ſafety, comfort, and welfare. For *to loue ones ſoule*, in this place, is otherwiſe taken then in the Goſpell by S. *Iohn*, chap. 12. 25. where it is ſaid, that *he which loueth his ſoule ſhal loſe it, and he that hateth his ſoule in this world, ſhall keepe it vnto eternall life.* *To loue the ſoule*, that is, to bee deſirous of retaining this naturall life, as rather to denie the truth of God, and forſake the Goſpell of *Chriſt*, then to make profeſſion thereof, and yeeld ſincere obedience to it, with hazard and perill: and *he ſhall loſe his ſoule*, that is, forfeit his ſaluation and happineſſe, as *he that hateth his ſoule*, which chuſeth to forgo life, rather then the ſeruices of God, and a good conſcience; *ſhall keepe it vnto eternall life*, be ſaued and glorified for euer. *He keepeth vnderſtanding*; not onely heareth good inſtructions, but ſeriouſly attendeth to them, pondereth of them in his meditations, layeth them vp in his memorie, obſerueth them diligently in the courſe of his life, & retaineth them conſtantly till the time of his death, *to find that which is good*, that is, the end which he propoſeth to himſelfe, and this is the ſucceſſe which he obtaineth, that Gods fauour ſhall be confirmed vnto him, both by the bleſſings of this preſent life, and by a bleſſed eſtate, in that which is to come hereafter.

Verſ. 9. *A falſe witneſſe ſhall not be vnpuniſhed: and he, that ſpeaketh lies ſhall periſh.*

THis is the ſame both in words and ſenſe with the 5. verſ. of this chapter, ſauing that there was ſaid, *the liar ſhall not*

eſcape

escape, and here *he shall perish*: so that it is not onely a repetition, but a briefe exposition of that, concluding, that as he shal be surely punished, so he shall be sorely plagued, euen with no lighter strokes, then destruction it selfe, which no gaine or aduantage can be able to counteruaile.

Vers.10. *Pleasure is not comely for a foole: much lesse for a seruant to haue rule ouer Princes.*

PLeasure] The affections of ioy and delight, the meanes whereby they are wrought, and the obiects whereon they are setled, as abundance of wealth, delicious fare, gorgeous apparell, sumptuous houses, costly furniture, pleasant pastimes, or whatsoeuer is of like nature, *is not comely for a foole*, is not fit for him that is destitute of grace, and good vnderstanding to haue, as neither making for his honour, nor profit indeede, though highly promoting both in appearance. Hee will peruert them, and annoy other men by them, and they will indanger him, and bring much harme and mischiefe to him. *Much lesse for a seruant to rule ouer Princes.* By *seruant*, he meaneth such manner of persons as he called fooles in the former clause; namely, men inthralled to their lusts, and vnlawfull desires: and by *Princes*, are vnderstood the godly, who are dignified with a spirituall aduancement: so that he proceedeth in extenuating the condition of sinfull men, and sheweth their vnworthinesse by way of gradation, that all sorts of desireable things are too good for them, and much more authoritie and power ouer others, but most of all superioritie, with iurisdiction ouer the righteous.

Vers.11. *The vnderstanding of a man, maketh him slow to wrath, and it is his glorie to passe by an offence.*

THe vnderstanding of a man] The heauenly wisedome of God, which is in the minde of a regenerate person, according to the measure thereof, withholdeth him from rash and vnaduised anger, but not from all anger: for then it should depriue

priue him of ſome vertue, and diſable him from the performance of many duties. As the diſtempered paſſions of wrath be workes of the fleſh, and carefully to be auoyded, ſo are the well gouerned affections of anger fruites of the ſpirit, and ſeaſonably to be exerciſed. He that is ouercarried with rage and choller, doth want thoſe louely graces of meekenes, and patience: and he that is neuer ſtirred to any diſpleaſure, is poſſeſſed with ſtupidity, and deſtitute of zeale, and Chriſtian feeling. Now to ſhunne theſe vicious extreames on both ſides, and obſerue the laudable mediocritie between them, theſe rules may direct vs. Firſt, that all our anger be onely for ſinne, and ſo we ſhall beſt put in practiſe the Apoſtles precept, to be *angrie and ſinne not*. Then ſhall wee not be teſtie with them that be innocent, becauſe wee are incenſed by them that are faultie: then ſhall we neuer like fumiſh *Balaam* fall out with beaſts, and vnreaſonable creatures, much leſſe be imbittered againſt things that are ſenſeleſſe. Secondly, that our anger bee meaſurablie proportioned to the meaſure of the offence, greateſt indignation muſt bee conceiued againſt the greateſt tranſgreſſions, though they bring not to vs ſo great annoyances: and ſmaller faults ſhould leſſe diſpleaſe vs, though in priuate reſpects they ſeeme to be more for our dammage: for euery part ought rather to be tenderly affected at Gods diſhonour, then his owne detriment. Thirdly, that it be not ouerlong continued, and exceſſiue in time, but bounded within the limits of a day at the furtheſt: the Lord would not haue *wrath* protracted til night, *nor the Sunne to goe downe vpon it*. Fourthly, that the crimes of our familiars, benefactors, kinsfolke, and deareſt friends, doe make vs more angrie then theirs that are not ſo neerely vnited to vs: that we take to heart the ſinne of our childe, more then of a brother: and of a yoke-fellow, more then of a childe: and our owne, more then a yoke-fellow, childe, brother, or of any, or all others. Epheſ. 4. 26.

Fifthly, that the ire and wrath againſt the ſins of our neighbours, draw not our ſelues into any ſinfull behauiour againſt God, as to be fierce and violent in reuengement, to raile, to reuile, to vomit out blaſphemies, or imprecations, &c.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, that it hinder vs not from, but further vs to the performance of all good ſeruices, eſpecially in the behalfe of the parties delinquent, as to admoniſh them, pray for them, and giue them direction for reformation of their tranſgreſſions. *And it is his glorie*, it winneth him honour and praiſe, and that worthilie, *to paſſe by an offence*, to winke at ſmaller infirmities, and to remit greater wrongs, yet not ſo, as to be ſilent at Gods diſhonour, with the perill of the ſoule of the ſinner, or at the grieuances which are offered to himſelfe from them: only the forbearance of reuenge, and not of iuſt reproofe, or of due correction, is commended.

Thus thou ſeeſt both the roote, and the fruite, the cauſe and effect of lenitie and mildnes declared in this ſentence.

Verſ. 12. *The wrath of the King, is like the roring of a Lion: but his fauour is as the dew vpon the graſſe.*

THe *wrath of the King*] The indignation of a Prince, or mightie Potentate, hauing authoritie and power, incenſed (not againſt the innocent and righteous, but ſuch as were *Michaiah*, or *Elijah*, whom *Achab* ſtormed at, but killed not, or though he had killed them, yet he could not haue hurt thē, but himſelfe rather, as *Ioab* did, by ſlaying of *Zachary*, and ſending him the ſooner to heauen) but againſt malefactors, rebels, traytors, contemptuous perſons, and tranſgreſſors of his wholeſome lawes, or any whom God ſhall put into the Magiſtrates hand, as men of death, for violating his commandements, *is like the roring of a Lion*, which hath more courage and ſtrength, both to rore more hideouſly, and to teare more cruelly: For it is not vnderſtood of them that be taken, and ſhut vp like captiues in holes, whom we may heare, and looke vpon through grates, and ſtand neere too without perill, but of ſuch as meete with a prey, either of man or beaſts, in the forreſts, or open fields, or any where in their owne walkes. *But his fauour*, his loue, and countenance, eſpecially towards worthie men, *is like the dew vpon the graſſe*, very comfortable or profitable to them, reioycing their hearts, aduancing their ſtates,

ſtates, preſeruing, and protecting them from wrongs, as the dew, or milde ſhewres, doe refreſh the fields, cauſe graſſe to grow, and preſerue the ſame, that the ſcorching heate of the Sunne drie it not vp, and cauſe it to wither. When God ſhall put into the Magiſtrates hand, as men of death for violating his commandements in preſumptuous manner, *is like the roring of a Lion*, fearefull, terrible, and as it were threatning preſent death: The Hebrew word ſignifieth a yong Lion which hath greater courage, and ſtrength, both to rore more hideouſly, and to teare more cruelly, &c. *Naham cachphir.*

Verſ. 13. *A fooliſh ſonne is the calamitie of his father, and the contentions of a wife, are like a continuall dropping.*

TWo of the greateſt afflictions which befall the gouernors in their families, are declared in this ſentence. The former is *a fooliſh ſonne*, a ſinfull, vnhappie childe, after what ſort ſoeuer his lewdneſſe breaketh out, whether by contumacie, and ſtubbornnes, when he ſhall contemne his parents, and deſpiſe their precepts; or by riot, and vnthriftines, when hee ſhall be, as it were a gulph to ſwallow vp all his fathers labours, and thoſe things which he hath been ſo carefull to prouide; or by any other meanes ſhall bring ſhame and deſtruction vpon himſelfe, who *is the calamitie of his father*, the worker of his woe, and cauſe of ſorrow, for the looſenes of his life, and at the ſight, or foreſight (by all probabilitie and likelihood) of the miſerie of his death. The other is *a contentious wife*, whoſe brawlings offend the eares, and vexe the heart, and ſometimes demoliſh the ſtate of her husband, and therefore are compared to *a continuall dropping*: they are as irkeſome, and hurtfull, as for raine to pierce through euery part of the roofe, into all roomes of the houſe, falling on the plancks, and walls, and ſtuffe, and heads of them that are doing their worke, or ſitting at their meate, or lying in their beds, which muſt needes bee both tedious, and noyſome, to ruinate the building, and rot the goods, and moleſt the inhabitants.

Verſ. 14.

Verſ.14. *Houſe and ſubſtance are the inheritance of the fathers: but a prudent wife is from the Lord.*

IN the former ſentence, by a liuely ſimilitude, hee ſhewed how noyſome a bad wife is, and in this by another argument, he maketh it appeare what a great benefit a good wife is. He proueth it from the efficient, that the Lord doth beſtow her, and that in manner differing from his ordinary and common giftures. Houſes, and lands are his gifts alſo, and ſo are *riches*, and all ſorts of commodities, but they are ordinarily, commonly, and mediately receiued from anceſtors, as fathers, grand-fathers, & great grand-fathers, to whom the Lord hath giuen power to get, and keepe goods, and a will to leaue them from hand to hand to their poſterity. *But a prudent wife*, a godly, wiſe, and vertuous wife, and in like manner, a religious, diſcreet, and gratious husband, *is from the Lord*, made ſuch a one by his grace, and ioyned to the yoak-fellow.

Verſ.15. *Slothfulneſſe cauſeth heauie ſleepe to fall, and a deceitfull perſon ſhall be affamiſhed.*

THe dangerous effects of ſluggiſhneſſe are here ſet down, and deſcribed, whereof ſome are ſinnes, and heedfully to bee ſhunned, and others are puniſhments thereof, and greatly to be feared.

The firſt is, immoderate and exceſſiue ſleeping, whereby mens callings and labours are neglected, their time loſt, and their wits and ſenſes dulled: and this groweth partly from the abundance of humours, by which the head is oppreſſed, and partly from the want of cheerfulneſſe, whereby the heart ſhould be refreſhed: and therefore obſerue, that all ſluggards are lumpiſh, and like dead men, ſauing when they bee about the practiſe or proiect of ſome thing vnlawfull.

This drowſineſſe of theirs, and diſpoſition to ſleep, they are charged with, & chalenged for, in chap. 6. *How long wilt thou ſleepe, O ſluggard, when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleepe? &c.* Prou.6.9.

The

The ſecond is deceitfulneſſe, being inferred in the latter clauſe, as that which enſueth both vpon ſlothfulneſſe and ſleepineſſe. For they that loſe their time, can neither get wealth well, nor keepe that which others haue formerly gathered by their trauell. Then muſt they needs fall into indigency and want, and being not able to ſuſtaine the violence thereof, (for none are ſo impatient of pouerty, as thoſe who retchleſly throw themſelues into it) they will liue by their wits, and ſhift for themſelues, by falſhood and indirect courſes.

The third, which is the puniſhment of all the former, is famine, and miſerable neceſſity, which their fraud, and deceitfulneſſe doth double vpon them, and not preuent, or diminiſh. Or if it fall out that ſome by wrongfull dealing are holpen in their ſtate for a time, yet it turneth to their greater hurt, and deeper decay in time following: or if they thriue euen to their liues end, by their vniuſt and fraudulent practiſes, yet they ſhall rue it in the worlds end, for the *miſeries* and plagues that will come vpon them, as Saint *Iames* doth teſtifie. Iam. 5. 1.

The ſenſe therefore of the ſentence is this: Sothfulneſſe cauſeth men to be ſleepie and deceitfull, and hee that is deceitfull, ſleepie, or ſlothfull, *ſhall be affamiſhed.*

Verſ. 16. *He that keepeth the commandement, keepeth his ſoule: but he that deſpiſeth his waies, ſhall die.*

HE *that keepeth the commandement*] Which in the integritie, and vprightneſſe of his hart, obſerueth the law of the Lord, to walke in the ſame, although he cannot fulfill it, breaking it as little as he can, though hee cannot obey it ſo fully as hee would, and is humbled for his faults, when hee ſeeth his ſinnes and tranſgreſſions, *keepeth his ſoule*, himſelfe, a part being put for the whole, he preſerueth the life both of his ſoule and body, from an vntimely death, and eternall deſtruction, not by the merit of his obedience, but by the mercy of God, that rewardeth him for it: *But he that deſpiſeth his waies*, maketh no account how, or after what ſort he doth liue, nor hath care to bee directed by the preſcript rule of the holy word of God,

God, *shall die*, shall certainly perish, and be destroyed for euer, at the last, though peraduenture he be spared for a season.

Thus standeth the opposition: Hee that keepeth the commandement, and regardeth his waies shall liue: but hee that breaketh the commandement, and despiseth his waies, shall die.

Verse 17. *He that giueth freely to the poore, lendeth vnto the Lord, and the Lord will repay him his reward.*

HE *that giueth freely*] Which out of his compassion and mercy, without any carnall, or corrupt respect of his owne aduantage, ministreth food, apparell, harbour, or any kind of helpe and comfort, by word, or deed, *to the poore*, to them that are in affliction, of what sort soeuer, especially if they be Gods faithfull seruants, or seeme to bee such, lendeth to the Lord, not that he is beholden to vs, or receiueth any benefit at our hands: for what can we giue that hee lent not to vs, nor is his owne, nor in his power, to take, and dispose of, to whom he will without our leaue? but hee is pleased so to accept of our beneficence to our brethren, as if himselfe were thereby gratified, and had a good turne done to him: for men are many times pleasured by that which is lent them in their need, and are glad to buy the vse thereof with loane, and therfore it is noted as a worke of mercy from a good man, not only that he bestoweth gifts, but also that hee lendeth freely. So then God vouchsafeth to repute that which is paid vnto him, though imperfectly too, and scarce by the halues, to bee as it were a courtesie and kindnesse from vs, as if something of ours were deliuered to him. *And the Lord wil repay him his reward*, hee will as faithfully recompence the mercifull man, as if hee were bound thereto, and as an honest borrower will bee carefull to pay that which he oweth. For of his grace hee maketh himselfe a debtor, to them which are more in his debt, then their body and soule, and all that they haue is worth.

Psal.112.5.

Vers.

Verſe 18. *Correct thy ſonne while there is hope, and let not thy ſoule ſpare, which is to kill him.*

CORrect thy ſonne while there is hope,] chaſtiſe thy children of either ſexe, both by tongue and hand, with rebukes and ſtripes, being yet young and tender, and not growne ſtubſtorne, ſtiffenecked, incorrigible, and paſt hope of amendment, before they are accuſtomed to euill waies, or haue learned to deſpiſe the admonitions, menacings, rods, and ſcourges of parents. *And let not thy ſoule ſpare:* beware that thy fond affection withhold thee not from doing this neceſſarie dutie, which is, *to kill him*, leſt thy too great indulgencie to them, and cockering of them, turne to their deſtruction.

Verſe 19. *Being in great wrath, remit the puniſhment: but if thou let him eſcape, yet applie chaſtiſement againe.*

IN the former ſentence was declared the neceſſitie of correction, for the preuention of deſtruction, or danger of children, and what is the fitteſt ſeaſon to begin it, euen in their childhood. Now in this hee admoniſheth euery man to take heed that he marre it not, or hinder the good effect thereof by his owne deſtemper. And therefore it is ſaid, *Being in great wrath,* when thou art in an angrie mood, and burneſt with furie, and hot diſpleaſure, *remit the puniſhment,* let paſſe for that time the puniſhment of the partie offending. *But if thou let him eſcape, yet applie chaſtiſement againe.* Neuertheleſſe, though for that time, and perhaps for that fault thou let him goe free, yet leaue him not ſo to himſelfe, nor ſuffer him to goe on ſtill vnpuniſhed, but when thou art more calme, and as occaſion ſhall be offered, take him in hand, and chaſtiſe him.

Verſe 20. *Heare counſell, and receiue inſtruction, that thou maiſt be wiſe at the latter end.*

HAuing in the premiſes giuen precepts to parents and gouernours, he now conuerteth his ſpeech to children, and

ſuch as in the Scripture come vnder the name of children, that is to ſay, all Gods people, to whom he doth offer himſelfe as a father, being readie to teach and direct them. And the firſt leſſon that hee giueth vnto them is, that they ſhould *heare counſell*, lend an eare, and hearken diligently with attention, to wiſe and wholeſome doctrines and admonitions: the ſecond, that they receiue *inſtruction*, or correction, for the word ſignifieth both: that is, to ſubmit themſelues to, and make vſe of, and profit by, reproofes, threatnings, or chaſtiſements. And the reaſon of this exhortation, is both from the motiue that ſhould perſwade them thereunto, and the end that they ſhould propoſe to themſelues therein, and the happie ſucceſſe which they ſhould finde thereby, that *they may be wiſe in their latter end*, that their wiſedome may bee manifeſted, and they reape the fruite thereof in their old age, or whenſoeuer they are readie to depart out of the world, not but that hee would haue men to be wiſe alſo before, but to note, that all that time their heauenly wiſedome will ſtand them in beſt ſteed.

Verſ. 21. *Many deuices are in the hart of man: but the counſell of the Lord, that ſhall ſtand.*

Many deuices are in the heart of man] Sundrie thoughts are in their minds, of hopes, and doubts, and deſires, and ſo they toſſe matters too and fro in their imaginations, how they may auoide that which they feare, and accompliſh that which they deſire, and yet ſeldome bring them to any effect, or when they doe, it is not by force of their plotting or forecaſt. *But the counſell of the Lord it ſhall ſtand*; his will ſhall take place, whatſoeuer hee hath determined ſhall ſucceed, whether mens likings be to it, or againſt it.

Verſ. 22. *The deſire of a man is his goodnes: and a poore man is better then a lier.*

The deſire of a man] That which euery man ought moſt to wiſh and labour for in himſelfe, and to eſteeme and commend

mend in others, *is his goodnes*, his pietie and religion towards God, his mercie, truth, and vpright dealing towards men, and not a great eſtate, and earthly pompe, and he that in this manner doth good, and is faithfull and true, though hee be poore, not hauing ſtore and abundance of outward poſſeſſions, *is better*, in happier caſe, and more regarded of God, and good men, *then a liar*, then an impious, vnprofitable, and falſe man, though he be neuer ſo wealthie.

Verſe 23. *The feare of the Lord* leadeth *to life, and he* that is indued therewith, *ſhall remaine ſatisfied, and ſhall not be viſited with euill.*

THE *feare of the Lord*] Sound pietie and religion, a reuerence of his Maieſtie, ioyned with an vnfained loue thereof, *leadeth to life*, is by Gods free goodneſſe, according to his promiſe through Ieſus Chriſt, rewarded with a bleſſed and a comfortable life in this world, and a glorious, and eternall life in the world to come, *and he that is endued therewith, ſhall remaine ſatisfied*: the man in whom this holy feare dwelleth, ſhall neither liue in miſerable want, nor in feare or danger thereof, *but ſhall lodge ſatisfied*, as the word ſignifieth, ſhal conſtantly haue competent prouiſion, in the night hee ſhall not care for the day following, nor this day be doubtfull how he ſhall doe to morrow, but hee by whoſe prouidence hee is ſuſtained at one time, will not faile to miniſter whatſoeuer is needfull at all times. *And ſhall not be viſited with euill*, ſhall not be plagued with hurtfull calamities, and yet ſometimes tried with ſharpe aduerſities: and ſo are the two former promiſes touching life, and plentie, to be vnderſtood, that they are ſecured onely from a curſed death, or penurie, which are puniſhments of ſinne, and ſignes of Gods diſpleaſure. *Sabeang jalin.*

Verſ. 24. *The ſlothfull hideth his hand in his boſome, and will not put it to his mouth againe.*

SALOMON hath often tolde vs the nature and qualitie of the ſlothfull, and the miſerie and want, which of force they

must endure, by meanes of their sluggishnes, notwithstanding because the number of them doth daily increase, and this hurtfull vice groweth stronger, and more violent in them, he contenteth not himselfe with so many aduertisements, which hee hath alreadie giuen vs, but to the end that wee may take more heed of it, or else be more inexcusable, and iudged worthie of greater penurie: he repeateth here againe the mischiefe that it worketh in him ouer whom it getteth dominion, describing the same by an hyperbolicall, or excessiue kinde of speaking, saying, that *he hideth his hand in his bosome*, not setting it to worke, but withholding it from labour, *and will not put it to his mouth againe:* to auoide the cold, and for loue of ease, he holdeth it in a warme place, and though the distance be but small betweene the bosome and the mouth, yet hee is vnwilling to bring it from the one to the other, so much as to feede himselfe: for though hee doe it, (compelled thereunto by necessitie) yet he doth it with difficultie and *griefe*, as it is said in an other chapter.

Prou.26.15.

Not that hee setteth so little by his meate; for none are so hungrie after hony, as the idle Drones: but it is a torment vnto them to take any paines for it: their desire is, that others should trauell for them, and put their meat into their mouthes also, if shame would permit it.

So then, the hands of lazie persons are as it were bound with the loue of ease, which they preferre before matters of profit and necessitie; especially concerning the soule, and the spirituall food thereof, euen the word of God; whereby only it is to be sustained.

Vers.25. *Smite a scorner, that the foolish may beware: and reproue the prudent, and he will vnderstand knowledge.*

SMite] Either put to death, if thou bee a Magistrate of that authoritie, and the cause so require, or otherwise punish according to thy place, *the scorner*, a refractarie person, him that contemneth and derideth all admonitions and instructions, one, of whom there is no hope of amendment: for a scor-

ner is in the higheſt degree of tranſgreſſion, *that the fooliſh*, Pſal.11.
ſuch as through ſimplicity and ignorance are carried forwards to euill, *may beware*, may bee better brought to a ſight of their faults, and the danger thereof, and penitently reforme their waies.

And reproue the prudent, giue an eaſie rebuke to him that hath wiſedome, *and he will vnderſtand knowledge*, he ſhall not need to bee ſmitten, as the ſcorner, nor bee brought to ſee others puniſhed, as the fooliſh, but an admonition or reproofe will ſufficiently worke vpon him, both for information and reformation.

Verſe 26. *A leaud and ſhamefull child ſpoileth his father, and chaſeth away his mother.*

A *Leaud and ſhamefull child*] One that is graceleſſe, and giuen to riot, and other ſinfull waies, whereby his parents and friends are made aſhamed, *ſpoileth his father*, doth him as much harme, as if he brake into his houſe, and robbed him, or came as an open enemy to make ſpoile of all that hee hath: and many ſpare not their parents ſtate indeed, but either filch away their goods, and ſet them in debt and arreareages, by their waſtfulneſſe, *and chaſeth away his mother*, ſo alienateth her affection from him, by his rude and rebellious behauiour, that ſhe flieth as it were his preſence, and is glad when ſhee is out of his ſight: and ſomtime groweth to that vnnaturall inhumanitie, and more then barbarous and ſauage outrage, that he driueth her out of his preſence by railing & bitter ſpeeches, yea expelleth her out of the houſe, and turneth her out of doores, when once he commeth to his inheritance.

Verſ. 27. *Leaue off, my ſonne, to heare any more the inſtruction that cauſeth thee to erre from the words of knowledge.*

L *Eaue off, my ſonne*] Though in former times when thou waſt the diſciple of deceiuers, and the child of wrath, thy

care was open, and readie to heare such lessons as poysoned thy heart, yet now that thou art become the scholer of mee Wisedome, and begotten to bee my child, as being Gods child, now desist from that hurtfull and pernicious course, *cease to heare any more the instruction*, that pestilent and infectious counsell and doctrine, which is deliuered for instruction, and carrieth a shew of truth and wisedome, and yet will cause thee *to erre from the words of knowledge*, either peruerting thy mind with erronious opinios, or corrupting thy hart with sinfull affections, or deprauing thy waies with leaud and wicked behauiour, so that either thou shalt not vnderstand *the words of knowledge*, the heauenly doctrines of Gods holy word, whereby sound knowledge is obtained, or else wilt bee inticed to transgresse them.

Vers. 28. *A wicked witnesse mocketh at iudgement, and the mouth of the vngodly swallowe h vp iniquitie.*

A Wicked witnesse] A witnesse of *Belial*, as it is in the Hebrew text, one that the diuel himselfe, and his owne wicked disposition subborneth to periurie and deale corruptly, *mocketh at iudgement*, not onely giueth in false euidence, but doth the same of set purpose, maliciously, and without any fear, making no more account either of right causes, or of Magistrates that are placed to execute iustice, or of God himselfe that will punish false witnesses, then of a iest, or things to bee laughed at. *And the mouth of the vngodly will swallow vp iniquitie.* This hee alleageth as a reason of that his vntruth and falshood in witnes-bearing, because hee is desperately sinfull and bad in all his behauiour. *His mouth*, himselfe vile wretch, yet the mouth is mentioned because of the allegorie, *swalloweth vp iniquity*, committeth all villanies, with as great delight and pleasure, as drunkards doe strong drinke, or glottons delicious meates.

Verſ. 29. But *iudgements are prepared for theſe ſcorners, and ſtripes for the backe of fooles.*

THe behauiour of theſe contemptuous perſons was declared in the former ſentence, and their recompence followeth in this: for all their cunning and ſcorning ſpeeches, *iudgements*, puniſhments, many, and of diuers ſorts: for the plurall number noteth the multitude and variety of them: *are prepared for ſcorners*, not onely appointed, but ready to bee executed vpon them, either by the Magiſtrate, or elſe by the Lord himſelfe in this life, or in that which is to come, or in both. *And ſtripes for the backe of fooles*, ſharpe and ſeuere plagues, reſembled by the ſcourging of bondmen, are in a readineſſe both for the ſoules and bodies of theſe malicious and incorrigible *fooles*, which ſhall not lightly bee chaſtened, but grieuouſly, and extremely tormented, to their deſtruction. For the preparation doth argue ſome exquiſite torture, as fire prepared for the diuell and his angels: and *Tophet* prepared of old for that curſed King of *Aſſur*, &c. Mat. 25. 41. Eſai. 30. 33.

CHAPTER. XX.

Verſ. 1. *Wine is a mocker, and ſtrong drinke is raging, and whoſoeuer is deceiued thereby, ſhall not be wiſe.*

WIne] Needleſly, or immoderately taken, *is a mocker*, maketh him a mocker which intemperately abuſeth it: *and ſtrong drinke is raging*, cauſeth them that are ouer-gone therewith, to brawle, contend, breake forth into outrage, and goe together by the eares. *And whoſoeuer is deceiued by it*, enticed by the colour, or taſt of it, to exceed in it, by drinking too often, or too much, *ſhall not bee wiſe*, either with diuine wiſedome, or humane, but ſhew himſelfe a foole, and reape the fruit of his follie.

Verſ. 2. *The feare of the King is like the roaring of a Lion: he that prouoketh him to anger, ſinneth againſt his owne ſoule.*

THE *feare of the King*] His wrath, which ſtriketh a terrour into their hearts, with whom he ſheweth himſelfe offended, *is like the roaring of a Lion*, very fearfull and dangerous: *he that prouoketh him to anger*, which incurreth his indignation by diſobedience, or any ill demeanour, *ſinneth againſt his owne ſoule*, not onely defileth his ſoule with the tranſgreſſion of Gods holy Law, but putteth his life in great perill, and expoſeth the ſame to the ſentence of death.

Verſ. 3. *It is an honour for a man to ceaſe from ſtrife: but euery foole will be medling.*

IT *is an honour for a man*] It maketh for his praiſe, and procureth the tongues and hearts of men to giue him a good teſtimonie, to *ceaſe from ſtrife*, either not to enter into it at all, if vpon good conditions, without wrong to Iuſtice, or righteous caſes meet to be maintained, he may bee freed from it, or elſe to breake off, and put an end thereto, with as much celerity as may be conuenient: *but euery foole will be medling*, ſuch as are vnwiſe on the other ſide, doe loue contentions, and delight to bee ſtirring and ſtriuing vpon euery ſlight occaſion. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: It is a mans honour to ceaſe from ſtrife, and euery wiſe man will endeauour to keepe himſelfe quiet: but is a mans reproch to be contentious, yet euery foole will be medling.

Verſ. 4. *The ſlothfull will not plow becauſe of winter*, wherefore *he ſhall beg in ſummer and haue nothing.*

THE *ſlothfull will not plow becauſe of winter*] Heere is a deſcription of a tender and fearefull ſluggard. Indeed winter is cold, and the weather then ſomtimes biting, but yet it is a ſeaſon meet for plowing, which becauſe the aire is nipping

and

and sharp, he letteth alone; by which maner of speech is meant, that a small matter will easily stay an idle person from following his calling, *wherfore he shall beg*, shall be driuen to seek relieſe at other mens hands, *in sommer*, in harueſt when his neighbors that tooke paines in due time, are reaping of their commodities, and enioy plenty, which will bee the greater eye-sore and heart-grieſe vnto him, becauſe it is in the nature of sluggards to be enuious, *and haue nothing*, he sheweth the cauſe of his begging, namely, pennurie and need, when all his substance is consumed: & somtimes it falleth out also by Gods righteous prouidence, to bee the ſucceſſe of his begging, that no man shall be moued with compaſſion towards him, to miniſter any, or at leaſt ſufficient food or apparell vnto him.

Verſ. 5. *The counſell in the heart of a man is like deepe waters, but a man of vnderſtanding will draw it out.*

THe counſell in the heart of a man] The ſecret intent of his mind and purpoſe of his heart, *which is like deep waters*, is by ſome diuers times ſo cunningly hidden, and cloſely concealed in the ſecret corners and bottome of the ſoule, that it is a hard matter to ſound or perceiue the ſame. *But a man of vnderſtanding will draw it out*, he that is indued with wiſedome and diſcretion, will diſcouer and apprehend what practiſes are in hand, and what matters are like to be attempted. So it commeth to paſſe often, but not alwaies, nor neceſſarily, becauſe good men are not ſeldome circumuented by the wiles and craftie deuiſes of the wicked.

Verſ. 6. *Many men will boaſt euery one of his goodneſſe, but who ſhall find a faithfull man?*

MAny men] Proud and vaine-glorious perſons which are many, *will boaſt euery one of his goodnes*, will publiſh and ſet abroad the cõmendable qualities which they take to be in themſelues, & the kindnes and benefits which they performe to others: *but who can find a faithfull man?* The interrogation doth

doth import an impoſſibility, that faithfull men are not onely rare, but none at all; yet his meaning is not abſolutely that there are none faithful (for that would contradict other Scriptures, which haue teſtified of the vprightnes of ſundry good mē by name, & deſcribed the integrity of others which are not particularly mētioned) but that among theſe braggers, which are ſo forward to magnifie themſelues, & celebrate their owne praiſes, there is not *one faithfull* man to be found, which doth good with a good conſcience, in ſingleneſſe of heart towards God, and loue and compaſſion to his brethren.

Verſ. 7. *He which walketh in his vprightneſſe is iuſt: and bleſſed ſhall his children be after him.*

HE *which walketh in his vprightnes*] That without diſſimulation, conſtantly endeauoureth to obey the wil of God, labouring to know all that the Lord requireth at his hand, and as much as he can performe, al that he knoweth, and that with deſire to glorifie him, and likewiſe with hope to bee rewarded himſelfe, *is iuſt*, perfectly righteous by the merits of *Chriſt* without him, and righteous by the worke of Gods holy ſpirit within him: *and bleſſed ſhall his children be after him*, it ſhall both go well with himſelfe while he liueth (for ſo much is intended in this ſentence, though not expreſly mentioned) and with his poſterity alſo who ſhall ſucceed him. So doth he vſually bleſſe his ſeruants, but not at all times, ſome being otherwiſe recompenſed, and not in this manner: for many godly men haue no children at all, and others leaue ſuch behind them, as proue vnhappy and graceleſſe.

Verſ. 8. *A King that ſitteth on the Throne of iudgement chaſeth away euery one that is euill.*

A *King*] The ſupreme Magiſtrate principally, and others alſo of great authority, *ſitting vpon the Throne of iuſtice*, executing his office faithfully, *chaſeth away euery euill one*, affrighteth leaud malefactors, and either cutteth them off, or other-

otherwiſe puniſheth them, or they amend their waies, or flie out of his iuriſdiction, or at the leaſt from his preſence: *with his eyes*, by looking into cauſes, and taking knowledge of offences, whether it be by ſight or hearing, and therwith alſo he daunteth the wicked that appeare before him, his lookes and countenance being terrible vnto them.

Verſ. 9. *Who can ſay, I haue cleanſed my heart, I am pure from ſinne?*

WHo can ſay] Who can truly and with good warrant affirme, *I haue cleanſed my heart*, I haue vtterly, and for euer freed my ſelfe from all vnlawfull deſires, delights, purpoſes, cogitations and motions. He beginneth at the heart, becauſe it is the fountaine, or at leaſt the ceſterne from whence corruption floweth; which yet muſt be vnderſtood of his own natural power, and not of grace: and of perfection, and not of ſincerity: for the Prophet doth truly profeſſe that he had *cleanſed his heart*, though in his tentation it ſeemed to be *in vaine*, which he did by the ſpirit of God, and in part, and by degrees, *I am cleane from ſin*, my nature, ſoule and waies are all pure, nothing can be laid to my charge, for vnlawfull thoughts, vnrighteous actions, vnfruitful ſpeeches, good duties at any time omitted, or ſinful works euer committed; meaning by that interrogation, that no man hath power ſo to walke, nor any reaſon ſo to boaſt. Notwithſtanding, this is nothing againſt that ſaying of S. *Paul: Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods choſen? It is God that iuſtifieth.* For hee there ſpeaketh of that innocency that the godly attaine vnto by remiſſion of their ſins in Gods preſence, who hauing receiued ſatisfaction for them from *Chriſt*, imputed them to him, and fully acquitteth them: and *Salomon* here ſpeaketh of another matter, that no man is throughly purged from originall corruption, and the impure humours that iſſue out of it. Neither let any man obiect that of S. *Iohn*, *Whoſoeuer is borne of God ſinneth not:* for he ſpeaketh not in that place of the practiſe, but the dominion of ſin, that a regenerate man yeeldeth not obedience vnto it,

Pſal. 73. 13.

Rom. 8. 33.

1. Ioh. 3. 9.

as

as a ſlaue to his maſter, but is taken captiue, or receiueth a wound, as a ſouldier from his enemy.

Verſ. 10. *Diuers weights, and diuers meaſures, euen both theſe are abomination to the Lord.*

Diuers weights] One heauier, another lighter, *and diuers meaſures*, one greater, another leſſe, to buy with the greater weight, and greater meaſure, and to ſell by the leſſe or lighter, or with a iuſt weight and meaſure to ſell to the wiſer ſort, and with the vniuſt to the ſimpler, whom they may eaſily deceiue, *both theſe*, and all ſuch kinde of crafty and couetous dealing, *are abomination to the Lord*, ſuch abominable iniquitie as the Lord will ſurely and ſharpely reuenge, and puniſh.

Verſe 11. *Euen a child will make knowne by his conuerſation, whether he be pure, and whether his worke be right.*

NEither young nor old can ſo lie hid, but that they will by one meanes or other, at one time or other, bewray what manner of perſons they are, and what manner of deeds they doe. If any may bee vnknowne, & not made manifeſt in both thoſe reſpects, ſurely thoſe of younger yeres are moſt likely to bee they, who are not tried in ſuch dealings, nor in ſo many matters as men of riper age, and yet here it is taught, that *euen a child*, a youngling, being yet tender, & not growne to mans eſtate, *will make himſelfe knowne by his conuerſation*, by his behauior, by his geſtures, by his ſpeech, by the courſe of his practiſes, *whether he be pure*, whether there be vprightnes, & plain meaning in him, without diſſimulation, or groſſe & profeſſed leaudnes, *and whether his worke be right*, whether that which he preſently doth, be with an honeſt mind performed, & whether he be like to take a good courſe in the reſt of hiſe to come. For euen young plants declare by their growing and budding, what trees they will proue to be, and what fruit they wil beare hereafter; ſo little ones often ſhew betimes, what expectation is to be had of them: they miniſter matter of hope, or feare

to

to them that conuerſe with them, and deſire to ſee grace and pietie in them. This is a dutie laid vpon euery childe, ſo ſoone as he is of any diſcretion, and capable of inſtruction, that hee ſhould enter foorth-with into the good way, and walke conſtantly therein, howbeit wee confeſſe that many faile therein, either through want of good education, and bringing vp, or yeelding afterwards to the luſts of youth, decline and fall away from this towardlineſſe, which at the firſt appeared in them.

Verſ. 12. *The Lord hath made both theſe, euen the eare which heareth, and the eye which ſeeth.*

HIs meaning is, that the Lord hath formed the whole man, all the parts of his body, though hee nameth onely theſe two, as the ſeates and inſtruments of thoſe noble ſenſes of hearing, and ſeeing, which are mentioned with them, and theſe, together with all the reſt, he enableth and quickneth to doe their office.

Many haue eyes, and yet are depriued of the vſe and benefit thereof: many haue eares, and yet are oppreſſed with ſuch deaffenes, as that they vnderſtand little of that which is ſpoken vnto them: many haue legs, and feete, and are poſſeſſed with ſuch lameneſſe, as that they can neither runne nor goe: many haue armes and hands, and yet are ſo full of imbecillitie, and weakneſſe, with palſies, and other diſeaſes, as that they are able to doe no manner of worke. But as the naturall vſe of mans ſenſes, and members, are of Gods creation, and by his bleſſing, ſo after a ſpeciall manner is the ſpirituall, being promiſed as a peculiar fauour to his owne elect, who onely enioy the efficacie, from vertue, and fruite of his Goſpell. *Then* (ſaith the Prophet) *ſhall the eyes of the blinde be lightened, and the eares of the deaffe be opened. Then ſhall the lame man leape, as an Hart, and the dumme mans tongue ſhall ſing.* Iſai. 35. 5. 6.

Verſ. 13.

Verſe 13. *Loue not ſleepe, leſt thou come vnto pouertie: open thine eyes, and thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with bread.*

Loue not ſleep,] Though God grant thee libertie to take thy reſt, and to refreſh thy wearie body with *ſleepe*, yet *loue it not*, delight not too much in it, giue not thy ſelfe vnto it, nor vſe it exceſſiuely, nor otherwiſe giue ouer thy ſelfe to ſlothfulnes: for vnder immoderate ſleepe which is one exerciſe thereof, he comprehendeth all the reſt, *leſt thou come to pouertie*, this he alleageth as a reaſon, why he would not haue men to be too ſleepy and ſlothfull, becauſe ſuch idlenes begetteth and bringeth forth beggerie. *Open thine eyes*, be watchful, and diligently apply thy buſineſſe in thy calling: for many are too wakeful for playes, and cards, and dice, and dauncing, and drinking, and other diſorders: *and thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with bread*, it ſhall goe well with thee, and by thine honeſt labours and induſtry, thou ſhalt poſſeſſe, if not abundance of all things needfull for thine eſtate, yet enough, and ſo much as thou ſhalt be content with, and by Gods bleſſing finde very ſufficient.

Verſ. 14. *It is naught, it is naught, ſaith the buyer: but when he is gone apart, he boaſteth.*

IT is naught, it is naught,] Albeit the ware cheapened be good, and well worth the price demanded by the ſeller, yet the couetous buyer, to the end hee may get it better cheape, whiles hee is bidding money for it, diſpraiſeth it to the vttermoſt: *but whē he is gone apart, he boaſteth*, after he hath bought the thing, and behinde the ſellers backe, he praiſeth his bargaine, both for the goodneſſe of the commoditie, and for the good peny-worth which he had therein. And hereby in like manner the diſpoſition and behauiour of the ſeller is to be vnderſtood, which is as forwards to extoll, and ſet out that which is bad, as the other to finde fault with that which is good. For if they be both falſe and wicked, as this teſtimonie concerneth none

none other, they will depart with their owne, with no more truth, and equitie, then they ſeeke to come by another mans, and the Lord doth as much looke into, and loathe the iniuſtice of the one, as of the other.

Verſ. 15. *There is gold, and a multitude of precious ſtones: but the lips of knowledge are a precious Iewell.*

THe abilitie, and conſcience, and vſe of fruitfull ſpeaking is here commended by Compariſon, being preferred before thoſe things which are of greateſt eſtimation in the world, *there is gold*, great ſtore of it, in Mynes, in Coyne, in Plate, in Chaines, and Ornaments, & diuerſly vſed, & much deſired, and ſet by, *and a multitude of precious ſtones*, great varietie of rich Iemmes, as Diamonds, Carbuncles, Rubies, Iaſpers, Saphires, Emeraudes, &c. and many of the ſeuerall ſorts of theſe, *but the lips of knowledge*, the mouth, and lips of a godly wiſe man, vttering that ſound and holy knowledge which dwelleth in his heart, *are a precious Iewell*, ſurmount, and are more worth then all the treaſures before mentioned, and therefore more to be accounted of.

Verſ. 16. *Take his garment that is ſuretie for a ſtrange* man, *and make him giue a pledge* that vndertaketh *for a ſtrange* woman.

TAke *his garment*] Receiue a ſufficient pawne of him, and prouide for thine owne indemnitie, that thou be not defrauded of that which thou lendeſt, and if no better ſecuritie can bee giuen thee, receiue and keepe his Cloake, or Gowne, or Coate, *that is ſuretie for a ſtranger*, which giueth his word for ſuch as he ought not: for ſome vnacquainted with vs, may bee vndertaken for in their diſtreſſes, when their neede doth iuſtly require that helpe, which wee cannot of our ſelues miniſter vnto them, and yet may procure by our word, at another mans hand: and ſome well knowne vnto vs, and of our neereſt kindred, may be ſtrangers in this caſe, yea the better knowne, the

the more vnfit that we ſhould promiſe for them, hauing experience of their vnſufficiencie, or vnfaithfulnes. *And make him leaue a gage that vndertaketh for a ſtrange woman.* A ſtrange woman in the Scriptures, is vſually and euery where, for ought we remember to the contrary, taken for an harlot, or whoriſh woman; the ſenſe ſeemeth to bee, that if any man would offer to giue his word for an harlots debts, or take vp ought in his owne name to beſtow on a whore, he ſhould not be taken, nor haue any thing lent vnto him, without a morgage, or competent pledge, or ſuch ſound ſpecialty, as will certainly counteruaile the ſumme which he is bound for. The liberty and limitation of ſuretiſhip hath been ſomwhat more ſpoken of in the eleuenth Chapter, verſ. 15.

Verſ. 17. *The bread of deceit is ſweet to a man: but afterwards his mouth ſhall be filled with grauell.*

THis whole ſentence is allegoricall, wherein vnlawfull gaine is reſembled to food, the delight that it firſt bringeth to the pleaſant taſte of delitious meates, the minde to a mans mouth, and the miſchiefes that follow to grit, or little ſtones, which are very offenſiue to the teeth. *The bread of deceit*, all manner of maintenance, or commodities, craftily, cruelly, or by any vniuſt meanes compaſſed, and gotten, is *ſweet to a man*, maketh a worldling and an vnrighteous perſon ioyfull and glad: *but afterwards*, either in his life time, or at his death, or in the world to come, *his mouth ſhal be filled with grauell*, ſome great and grieuous miſeries ſhall befall him. For either his conſcience will ſting and bite him, and ſo he ſhall bee vexed with feares and horrours, or elſe the hand of God will inflict puniſhment and plagues vpon him, and ſo hee ſhall bee ouerwhelmed with anguiſh and torments.

Verſ. 18. *Eſtabliſh thy thoughts by counſell, and by prudent aduiſe make warre.*

HEE giueth in theſe words a caueat, that no man ſhould leane too much on his own iudgement, nor too ſuddenly

ly reſolue on enterpriſes, without mature deliberation, and ſound direction. *Eſtabliſh thy thoughts by counſell*, that thy purpoſes be not variable and vnconſtant, and that thy proceedings be not without proſperous ſucceſſe, and ſo vncomfortable: make as ſure worke as thou canſt, both to confirme thy mind, and to manage thine affaires in the beſt manner, and therefore communicate thy matters with ſuch thy friends as are both wiſe and faithfull. And looke well to this that Gods holy word be one, and the chiefe, euen beſt regarded, and moſt obeyed of all thy counſellors, ſo that nothing bee practiſed, or hearkened to, againſt it. *And by prudent aduice make warre*, eſpecially in all matters of weight, of which ſort war is, (wherein the eſtates of Countries, and the liues of many perſons are hazarded) let nothing be raſhly attempted, but all things well conſidered of, and conſultation had with men of piety, vnderſtanding, skill, and experience.

Verſe 19. *With him that goeth about as a ſlanderer, diſcloſing a ſecret, and with him that flattereth with his lips, ioyne not thy ſelfe.*

ALbeit it is a good thing to take counſell, yet it is not ſafe for a man to communicate his affaires to all ſorts of perſons: for if a ſecret bee not kept, counſell is made fruſtrate. Wherefore hee giueth a caueat to beware, among others, of two kinds of people eſpecially, wherof the firſt are ſlanderers, and tale-tellers, whom (as hee did in the eleuenth Chapter, verſ. 13.) he reſembleth to Pedlers, who mingle ſundry ſorts of wares together, and goe from place to place to vtter thoſe things which they haue receiued from others, for that they tell that to this man, which they heard of that, and wander hither and thither to gather vp tales to tell whereſoeuer they come, and commonly report them otherwiſe, and farre worſe then they heard them; neither is there any thing that they can conceale, what dangers or miſchiefes ſoeuer the diſcloſing of it will procure.

Of the ſecond kinde are flatterers, ſuch as will ſpeake faire,

and gloze with their tongues, pretending loue, and profeſſing good liking, when they doe onely ſound thee to be made acquainted with thy purpoſes.

Verſ.20. *He that curſeth his father or his mother, ſhall haue his light put in extreme darkeneſſe.*

HE *that curſeth his father or mother*] Which vttereth imprecations, railing and reuiling ſpeeches, ſcoffes & ieſts, or any manner of deſpitefull words againſt both his parents, or either of them, to their face, or behind their backes, or after what ſort ſoeuer hee declareth by his words the bitterneſſe of his heart, to bring them to contempt, and to profeſſe how lightly and baſely hee eſteemeth of them, *ſhall haue his light put out in extreme darkeneſſe*, all his proſperity, which in the Scripture is often compared to light, ſhall be turned into woe and miſery, which is vſually tearmed by the name of darknes. And this he ſheweth ſhall not be ordinarie, and ſuch an affliction as common faults are corrected withall, but exceeding grieuous and fearefull, as appeareth by the Epithete *extreame*, or as it is in the Hebrew text, the blackneſſe of darkneſſe.

Verſ.21. *An heritage is haſtily gotten at the beginning, but the end thereof ſhall not be bleſſed.*

AN *heritage*] Lands, goods, money, offices, or promotions, and the like, *is haſtily gotten at the beginning*, is of many wicked men quickly atchiued by euill meanes, *but the end thereof ſhall not be bleſſed*, the iſſue of it ſhall bee vnhappy & curſed, partly in this reſpect that it is a ſnare to their ſoules, and ſtoppeth their way from eternall life, and partly in this, that it is like to be as badly ſpent as it was ill gotten, and hee that roſe vp to wealth ſo ſuddenly, may as ſuddenly, or by leiſure fall into want; as it is ſaid, that *a man with a wicked eye haſteth to riches, and knoweth not that pouerty ſhall come vpon him.* And *the thoughts of the diligent doe ſurely* bring *abundance: but whoſoeuer is haſty*, commeth *ſurely to pouerty*, and partly

Prou.28.22.

Prou.21.5.

partly in this that it bringeth them many perturbations and troubles whiles they retaine it.

Verſ. 22. *Say not, I will recompence euill, waite on the Lord, and he will ſaue thee.*

SAy not, I will recompence euill] Be ſo farre from reuenging thy ſelfe indeed, for iniuries done vnto thee, as not in words to threaten, or in minde to purpoſe any vengeance. *But waite on the Lord*, commend thy cauſe vnto him, and ſtay his leiſure till he deliuer thee, *and he will ſaue thee*, he ſaith not, hee will reuenge thee, and plague them, though he will do ſo, vnleſſe our aduerſaries repent, yet he would not haue vs ſo much to thinke of, or deſire that, as to put our truſt in him, referring our ſelues wholly to that which ſeemeth him good to doe, without deſiring hurt to them which do vs hurt: defence and ſaluation to our ſelues is that which wee muſt ſeeke for, and Mat. 5. 44. pray (as our Sauiour both did and taught) that our enemies may rather be pardoned then puniſhed. Now theſe words are added to the former, both as a reaſon thereof, and an anſwere to an obiection that might bee vrged, or at leaſt conceiued againſt the Precept in the firſt clauſe: If I reuenge not wrongs, I ſhall be vndone with wrongs, euery man will boldly tread vpon me. Nay, ſaith hee, there is no ſuch perill, the Lord will take the cauſe into his hand, and helpe thee, and though it bee not ſo apparant at firſt, yet thou ſhalt perceiue it at laſt that he is thy protector, it being his office to defend the innocent, and oppreſſed. And whereas it is ſaid that he will ſaue ſuch as waite vpon him, it is not ſo to be vnderſtood, that hee will alwaies deliuer them that are wronged from their preſent moleſtations and troubles, that the aduerſarie ſhall be compelled to ſurceaſe his practiſes: for many are vexed and purſued as long as they liue, and yet depend vpon God with faith and patience: but though they continue in afflictions til their death, yet herein they finde him true of his promiſe, that hee maketh them ouercome their enemies, and aduerſities, and are victorious by faith and patience, and thereby obtaine eternall ſaluation,

uation, to the which the children of God ought principally to aſpire.

Verſ. 23. *Diuers weights are abomination to the Lord, and deceitfull balances are not good.*

Diuers weights are abomination to the Lord] The Lord doth hate the ſinne which is committed by making of greater and ſmaller weights and meaſures, whereby men are defrauded of their right; and as he deteſteth the ſinne, ſo will he plague the ſinner, and make him taſte of his diſpleaſure, *and deceitfull balances are not good.* Balances by which men vſe to deceiue, as being too little, or too great, or any way fraudulent, *are not good*, neither be they allowed as lawfull and warrantable, but condemned as vniuſt and ſinfull, neither bring they any profit to thoſe that vſe them, though for a time they ſeeme gainfull vnto them, but turne to their hurt and detriment, as at laſt they ſhall find in their eſtates, or conſciences.

Verſ. 24. *The ſteps of man are of the Lord: and what doth a man vnderſtand of his way?*

THe ſteps of man are of the Lord] The Lord by his prouidence hath the appointment of the cogitations, purpoſes, actions, and ſpeeches of all men, together with the ſucceſſes, and euents of al that they deale in, their goings out, their commings in, their mouings and ſtirrings are not by their owne ſtrength, but by the power and will of the Almighty: a child that cannot go alone, but is borne in armes, hath not ſo much aſſiſtance from the Nurce or keeper to vphold him, or to teach him how to goe, or ſet his foot forwards, as the wiſeſt, or ſtrongeſt receiueth from God. And after a ſpeciall manner by his grace and ſpirit, hee directeth and guideth the hearts and waies of his people for his owne ſeruices, and their ſaluation. *And what doth a man vnderſtand of his way?* Who hath wiſedome and knowledge of himſelfe rightly to order his affaires, and to diſcerne the effects and iſſues of that which hee

taketh

taketh in hand, and to foreſee the things which ſhall befall him.

Verſ. 25. *It is a ſnare for a man to deuoure that which is ſanctified, and after the vowes to call backe.*

IT *is a ſnare for a man*] This ſacriledge deſcribed in the words following, is paſſing dangerous, tending to the deſtruction of the partie committing it, as the food vnder the net, or within the compaſſe of the grinne, doth to the ſlaughter of the birds, and the baite vpon the hooke to the death of the fiſh, *to deuoure that which is ſanctified*, to peruert thoſe things which are by Gods ordinance appointed for his ſeruices, from the right vſe of them, to his owne priuate gaine and commoditie. When this Scripture was written, diuers things were vnlawfull for any to eate, but for the Prieſts and Leuites onely, vnleſſe it were in caſe of neceſſity, as the ſhewbread, and ſundry oblations in the Temple, and tithes, and firſt fruites of trees, &c Now he alludeth thereunto, and comprehendeth vnder theſe all other things of like vſe, and deſtinated to the ſame maine end, to ſerue for his worſhip. And it is not onely ſinfull and perillous to robbe God of thoſe things which himſelfe doth chalenge, or his ſeruants haue dedicated to him, but to detaine, or ſeeke to recouer againe that which our ſelues haue voluntarily couenanted with our lips, or harts to giue vnto him, or to any good vſes. And therfore he ſaith, *after the vowes to call backe*, either to wiſh the vow vnmade, or to withhold the thing which in heart hath been vowed, or in ſpeech promiſed to him.

This God forbiddeth in his law, where he ſaith: *If thou haſt vowed a vow vnto the Lord, deferre not to pay it: for the Lord thy God will require it of thee, and it will bee a ſinne in thee: but if thou abſtaineſt from vowing, it ſhall not be a ſinne.* Deut. 23. 21.

Verſe 26. *A wiſe King ſcattereth the wicked, and turneth the wheele ouer them.*

A Prudent gouernour is in this ſentence compared to a skilfull Husbandman: for as the Husbandman winnow-

eth or fanneth the corne, to the end the chaffe may be seuered from the pure graine: so a *wise King*, or godly Magistrate *scattereth the wicked*, breaketh the knot of drunkards, gamesters, theeues, robbers, seditious persons, and other malefactors, *and turneth the wheele ouer them*, inflicteth sharpe punishments vpon them, as they vsed in those countries to beat out the hard corne with a cart wheele, as may appeare by the testimonie of the Prophet *Isaiah*, who resembling the Lords moderate and wise proceedings to that course which the thresher taketh in dealing with his corne, saith: *Fitches are*
Isai.28.27.28. *not threshed with an iron instrument, neither shall a cart wheele be turned about vpon the Cummin, but the Fitches are beaten out with a staffe, and Cummin with a rod. Breadcorne when it is threshed, he doth not alwaies thresh, neither doth the wheele of his cart still make a noyse, neither will hee breake it with the teeth thereof.*

Vers.27. *The light of the Lord is the breath of man, and searcheth all the bowels of the bellie.*

THe *light of the Lord*] That grace which out of his loue, he worketh by his word, and infuseth by his spirit, *is the breath of man*, the very life and felicity of a godly man, *and searcheth all the bowels of the bellie*; findeth out most deep and secret things: it causeth him to know the hidden counsels of God, and the state of his owne soule: for as *the word is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*,
Heb.4.12. so it informeth the man in whom it dwelleth with the nature and quality of the same, that he may iudge himselfe with righteous iudgement, discouering his corruptions to be corruptions, and his graces to be graces, that hee shall neither approue of the one sort as if they were vertues, nor condemne the other for illusions: or at least (though sometimes Gods children in tentations doe faile on both sides) yet they be easily reduced from their errour by the ministery of the word, or by wholosome conference with godly Christians: whereas the hearts of the wicked wanting this light, are like darke chambers locked vp from

from themſelues, that they could neuer looke into them (for the word which we tranſlate bowels, doth ſignifie chambers) and they doe with no more ſound vnderſtanding apprehend, either the myſteries of ſaluation, or the conſtitution of their owne ſoules, then with their bodily eye they can ſee what is in their intrels and belly.

Verſ. 28. *Mercy and truth preſerue the King: for his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed with mercy.*

MErcy] Pity and compaſſion towards ſuch as are oppreſſed, and mildneſſe and lenity towards penitent offenders, and benignity and kindneſſe, ſo far as opportunity ſerueth to ſhew the ſame towards all loyall ſubiects: *and truth*, adminiſtration of Iuſtice, whereby euery one hath his due: good men encouragement; euill men correction: and all men the enioyment of thoſe things which are their owne, and by right appertaine vnto them: *preſerue the King*, procure the ſafety of perſon, ſtate, and honour, both of Kings, and all other great perſonages in authority: *for his throne*, his kingly dignity and power, wherof the throne is a ſigne and repreſentation, *ſhall be eſtabliſhed*, made the more ſure; and continued the longer to himſelfe or his poſterity, *by mercy*, aſſociated with truth and righteouſneſſe: for as here he expreſſeth that, and intendeth the other, ſo elſewhere he expreſſeth the other, and that is intended, as chap. 16. verſ. 12. *It is an abomination for Kings to commit wickedneſſe: for the throne is eſtabliſhed by iuſtice.*

Verſ. 29. *The glory of young men is their ſtrength, and the honour of the aged is the gray head.*

THe glory of the young is their ſtrength,] It is an ornament vnto them, and praiſe for them to be ſtrong, valiant, and full of agility and courage, if they vſe theſe gifts well, and exerciſe them profitably in their callings, and for the good of the Common-wealth wherein they liue: for otherwiſe if they

be boysterous, violent, and giuen to fighting and quarrelling, especially if they imbolden themselues therewith, to robberies, or such like villanies, they are no more commendable in them, thē is the strength of great Beares, or other wild beasts which are noysome and hurtfull: *Goliah*, and *Og*, and the *Anakims*, and other Giants were tall men, yea huge and strong, and yet are neither praise worthie, nor praised: *and the honour of the aged is the gray head.* the white haires which publish their anciencie, and the multitude of yeeres which they haue liued, doe bring credit and reuerence vnto them, so that they be garnished with grauity, wisdome, and other vertues, as it is said, *Old age is a crowne of glory, when it is found in the way of righteousnesse.* chap. 16. vers. 31.

Vers. 30. *The blewnesse of the wound serueth to purge the euill, and the stripes within the bowels of the bellie.*

THe *blewnesse of the wound,*] Sharpe corrections, and seuere punishments which are argued by the effects, or signes thereof, *serueth to purge the euill*, is the ordinance of God, together with rebukes and instructions, to draw diuers persons that will not otherwise be reclaimed out of their sins, *and the stripes within the bowels of the bellie*, such strokes as pierce inwardly, and make the heart to ake: not that in chastising it is lawfull to strike so hard, or so much, or to vse such rods, or scourges as will pierce into the intrailes; for that were to indanger life, and to put to death, but hee sheweth the manner how the euill is cured, where the correction taketh good effect, that it entreth into the inward parts, affecteth the soule with sorrow and feare, and not only the body with pain and smart: that the mind is no lesse touched with it then the flesh. In this sense was the same word vsed in the seuen and twentieth vers. *The light of the Lord searcheth into the bowels, or chambers of the belly.*

CHAP.

CHAPTER. XXI.

Verse 1. *The heart of the King is in the hand of the Lord: as the riuers of water, he turneth it whithersoeuer he will.*

THE *heart*] The affections, will, and purposes of the *King*, of all great personages and rulers, *is in the hand of the Lord*, in his power, and at his disposing. It is a borrowed speech from men, who shew their strength, and performe their actions, principally by their hands. Now this is true also of subiects, and inferiour persons: For all mens hearts are in his *hands*, but hee nameth *Kings*, because they of all others are most absolute, & not subiect to the cõmandment of any creature; and therefore his power doth the more appeare in the ruling and ouerruling of them, and it followeth by consequent that none other can resist him: and this hee illustrateth by a comparison frõ the like, *the riuers of waters*, the streames, flouds, and tides, those headie, violent, and boysterous creatures, which no man, or all men can tame or gouerne, and yet by him are commanded, restrained, and easily ordered; as were the red sea, and Iordan, and the great inundation in *Noahs* time, when God called vp the huge depthes out of the earth, and opened the windowes of heauen to let downe flouds from aboue, that all these waters should meet together to couer the earth, and yet in a short time (by his appointment) they all returned to their places, without any stay or lingering. *He turneth it whithersoeuer he will*, his grace guideth the godly, his power driueth the wicked, and his prouidence preuaileth with both, that they, and all their determinations are wholly at his disposing: yet doth he not giue any of them commandement, encouragement, or toleration to doe euil, neither infuseth corruption into their hearts, whereby he should become the authour of their euill doings. That then which

which he affirmeth and teacheth, is, that the Lord hath a prouident hand in the gouerning of all gouernours. The dignity and preheminence ouer their ſubiects, is very large and lawfull, but farre inferiour to his owne ouer them. For hee ruleth in the heart, which they cannot deale with; and effectually directeth euery action of all commanders, which no commander hath power to doe, in the ſeuerall affaires of his vnderlings: hee maketh them flexible to his purpoſes, and boweth their minds which way it pleaſeth him: whether it be to ſhew fauor, as one *Pharaoh* did to *Iacob*, in *Ioſephs* time; or to deale vniuſtly and cruelly as another *Pharaoh* did to *Iacobs* ſeed after *Ioſephs* death: and this commeth to paſſe, becauſe he made
Pſal.33.15. the men, and faſhioneth their hearts: hee giueth them the power of ſence, of cogitation and purpoſe; all the motions of life are his gift, becauſe hee hath not onely made them creatures, and men, but Potentates alſo, and mighty men: their greatneſſe is as well from him, as their ſubſtance and being, & therfore both the one and the other muſt needs be for him.

Verſ. 2. *Euery way of a man is right in his owne eyes: but the Lord pondereth the heart.*

PRoud and ignorant perſons, the moſt ſottiſh and fooliſh of all others, are ſo inamoured with the liking of their owne doings, and giuen to flatter themſelues in the eſtimation of their owne courſes, as that they deeme all to be well performed which they manage, and nothing worthy of reprehenſion which they ſay or enterpriſe, bee it neuer ſo vnlawfull and abſurd. Whileſt *Paul* liued without the knowledge *of the law*, and in the continuall tranſgreſſion thereof, he moſt gloried in the happineſſe of his eſtate: he thought himſelfe then to
Rom.7.9. be *aliue*, notwithſtanding that ſin liued and raigned in him, to the death of his ſoule, and ſo to his damnation, had not Chriſt by grace deliuered him from the ſame. And our Sauiour fore-ſignified to his ſeruants what entreaty they ſhould
Ioh.16.2. looke for at the hands of ſuch as had no knowledge of him, that they would thinke that they did an acceptable ſeruice to God

God, when violently they ſhould kill them. *But the Lord pondereth the heart*, he ſtrictly and narrowly examineth, as it were with weights in a ballance, whether their purpoſes and affections be ſincere, or otherwiſe, and finding them failing therein, he conuinceth them to be culpable and faulty, how glorious ſoeuer their actions appeare to themſelues and others. And thus much Chriſt himſelfe gaue the bragging and conceited Phariſes to vnderſtand, when he ſaid: *ye are they which iuſtifie your ſelues before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly eſteemed among men, is abomination in the ſight of God.* Luk.16.15.

Verſ.3. *To doe iuſtice and iudgement, is more acceptable to the Lord than ſacrifice.*

TO doe iuſtice and iudgement.] To performe the workes of equity, loue, and mercy to men, with other duties of righteouſneſſe commanded in the ſecond table, from an vpright heart, *is more acceptable*, better pleaſing *to the Lord*, and bringeth more recompence, *than ſacrifice*, than without them, all ſorts of gifts, oblations, and other leuiticall rites, preſcribed in the ceremoniall law, or that meere externall act of Gods worſhip, preſcribed in the morall law, as making of Praiers, ſinging of Pſalms, reading of the Scriptures, hearing of Sermons, receiuing of the Sacraments, obſeruing of the Sabbath, &c. This expoſition we haue out of the Prophet *Iſaiah: Bring no more oblations, incence is an abomination vnto me; the new moones & Sabbaths, the calling of your aſſemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquitie euen the ſolemne meeting. Your new moones, and your ſolemne feaſts my ſoule hateth: they are a trouble to me, I am a weary to beare them. And when you ſpread forth your hands I wil hide mine eies from you: when you make many praiers, I will not heare you: your hands are full of blood: waſh you, make you cleane put away the euill of your doings from before mine eies: learne to doe well, ſeeke iudgement, relieue the fatherleſſe, pleade for the widow, &c.* Iſaiah. 1.13.14 15.16.17.

So then that which he teacheth, is, that the more ſubſtantiall any duty is, ſo a greater care is to bee had for the performance Hoſ.6.6. 1.Sam.15.22. Mich.6,6,7.

mance of it. *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice* (saith the Lord) *and the knowledge of God more then burnt offerings.*

For first, wee shall more faithfully imitate the Lord Iesus Christ, and most cleerely shew forth his image, in the exercise of true piety and godlinesse, with the practise of sound righteousnesse, and mercy, in comparison whereof ceremoniall rites are of small respect: for he best knowing his fathers will, doth thus acknowledge it vnto him, *sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine heart hast thou prepared &c.* And next, the most guilefull people and dissemblers, haue euer beene as forward with sacrifices and outward obseruations, as the best Christians, but alwaies as remisse in vpright dealing, as the worst infidels. And therefore by faithfull execution of iustice and iudgement, they that are vnfainedly righteous may chiefely be discerned from dissemblers, and hypocrites.

And lastly, better seruice is performed to the Lord for the honour of religion, greater good is done to our brethren for the benefit of mankinde, and larger reward wil be giuen to our selues, for our eternall happines, by discharging the substanciall & more necessary duties of righteousnes then by resting in the circumstantiall, or lesse weightier exercises of religion.

Vers. 4. *He that hath haughty eyes, is also of a proud heart, the plowing of the wicked is sinne.*

HE *that hath haughty eyes,*] Which looke bigly, whereby likewise all staturely gestures are taxed, *is of a proud heart:* the word in the Hebrew text, signifieth one of a large heart, meaning that he swelleth with a great opinion of himselfe, and carrieth in like manner an aspiring minde to grow greater and greater, which is euen odious, for that in effect it is commonly ioyned with disdainfulnesse, and scornefull contempt of others, contrary to that modesty, humanity, and christian courtesie which humility begetteth, and is also an impudent boasting of a mans owne worth, though it be not directly vttered in expresse termes.

For by his facing and bearing his head on high, he would haue

haue all men to take notice of his great estate or comely personage, or singular qualities, or some admirable excellencie that is in him. And the lamentable euent of it, bewrayeth the loathsomnesse therof: sithence the Lord is thereby prouoked to so great and grieuous displeasure: For it is one, and the first of those *sixe and seuen things which hee hateth, yea which his soule abhorreth:* and therefore will also with such seuerity punish, as hee threateneth by the Prophet saying: *The high looke of man shall be humbled, and the loftinesse of men shall bee abased, and the Lord only shall bee exalted in that day: For the day of the Lord is vpon all the proud and hautie, and vpon all that is exalted, and it shall be made low.* Pro.6.16.17. Esai.2.11.12.

The plowing of the wicked, &c.] The proiects, plots, and practises of sinfull proud persons, which by a borrowed speech are called *plowing*, in regard of the industrie whereby they seeke to accomplish their purposes, *is sinne*, they are such attempts as tend to the breach of Gods holy law: either for impiety, or vnrighteousnesse, and turne consequently by due desert to their owne ruine, as a recompence of sinne, vnlesse they breake them off by repentance. The drift therefore of this sentence, is, to declare the pernicious effects of pride, and the hurts which it worketh to them in whom it raigneth: as puffing vp their minds with euill conceits, filling their hearts with ambitious lusts, disfiguring their faces with arrogant lookes, and peruerting all their endeauours to that which is euill.

For their heart delighteth in it, they greedily long after it, nothing is more pretious vnto them, no not their corne, cattell, coyne, nor any other commodities. And they are wholly made of flesh, and sauour of nothing else but flesh; and therefore to what can they be intent, and diligently, but to that which is sinful & fleshly? moreouer, they are the plough-men, hinds, and drudges of Satan, who will not allow them to doe any worke but his, nor permit them at any time to be remisse in his worke, much lesse to bee occupied about the worke of his enemie.

Vers.

Verſ. 5. *The thoughts of the diligent doe ſurely bring plentie, but euery one that is haſtie commeth to want.*

THE *thoughts, &c.*] The prouidence, the wiſe & iudicious forecaſt directing the actions, and affaires *of the diligent*, of him that is faithfull in his vocation, labouring therein for conſcience ſake, and not for couetouſneſſe, doe by little and little, from time to time encreaſe his ſubſtance, and adde to his ſtocke, ſo that hee walketh in the ready way to great wealth, which either in time he ſhal attaine vnto in copious and plentifull meaſure, or haue his heart well ſatisfied with a ſmaller portion, yet made ſufficient for him with as large a bleſſing from the hand of the Lord that gaue it. Vnto which diligent man is oppoſed the haſtie perſon, one that boyleth with an immoderate deſire of riches, and to bee wealthie all at once without delay; whom though he be not vtterly idle, yet God reputeth no better then a ſluggard, becauſe he is not well occupied, nor willing to continue his diligence, if euer he ſhewed any, as his greedie longing after goods doth declare, to the end he may be freed from much trauell, and would get a great deale of ſubſtance with a little labour. Then contrary to premeditation, and the working thoughts of the diligent, is the precipitant raſhneſſe of him that is haſtie, taking matters in hand vnaduiſedly, without deliberation: and therefore the vnhappie euent of him that is vnaduiſed, proueth alſo contrary to the proſperous ſucceſſe of him that is vnaduiſed, and circumſpect, the one growing to abundance, the other fading to nothing. And therefore it commeth to paſſe that the more forward and greedy men are after the world, the worſe they are like to proſper, as Saint *Iames* ſaith: *From whence are wars and contentions among you? are they not hence, euen of your luſts that fight in your members? ye luſt and haue not: ye haue enuie and indignation and cannot obtaine: ye fight and warre and get nothing, becauſe ye aske not. Ye aske and receiue not, becauſe yee aske amiſſe, that ye might conſume it on your luſts.* For the fountaines whereout this ardent deſire of riches, and haſt to bee wealthie

Iam. 1.2.3.

wealthie doth iſſue, are the filthie ſinkes of pride, vaine confidence, and infidelity: For why doe men ſo highly eſteeme and adore their ſiluer as a God? What cauſeth them to haue earthly poſſeſſions in ſo great admiration, and to preferre them incomparably before heauenly grace and glory, but that they deeme honor to be neceſſarily annexed vnto them, & dreame that ſafety is neuer ſeparated from them, and doubt on the other ſide, that their life muſt needs be vnhappie without them? Moreouer, the waies and practiſes of thoſe that would flee vp ſo faſt to abundance, be ſuch as are fit to draw them downe to penurie, both by the ſting of Gods iudgement, and the ſcourge of their owne imprudence: for neither piety, equity, nor good aduiſement is euer to bee found in a greedy earth-worme. He that maketh too much haſt to bee great, will take more leiſure then he ought to be godly: neither will he ſticke at any iniuſtice, or cruelty, that may ſerue for his aduantage; and therefore it is a true ſaying as well touching that which a couetous perſon doth, as what he muſt ſuffer: *he that haſteth to be rich ſhall not be innocent*, or vnpuniſhed: for the Hebrew word ſignifieth both. And how many ſnares hee layeth for himſelfe, to the intangling, and ouerthrowing of his owne eſtate, euery wiſe and diligent eye by ſerious obſeruation may eaſily apprehend. Sometimes hee is ouercharged with multiplicity of affaires, that hee is not able to manage any of them, and therefore ſpeedeth vnhappily in all of them. Sometimes he is caught with vnprofitable bargaines, and contracts: for though the match be very hard, and let the rate be neuer ſo vnreaſonable, yet baite it with time, and giue him daies of payment, then be ſure that bite he wil, and downe it ſhall how deerely ſoeuer it coſteth him afterward. And ſometimes the brittle chapman that is ready to breake, prayeth vpon him, when he hath ought to ſell: he offereth frankely, and giueth largely, for aboue the value of the commodity he would buy, to the intent his word may the more readily bee taken, or his bond alone, with which without more adoe hee purpoſeth to make ſatisfaction. And how long doth he keepe himſelfe out of the vſurers clutches? whoſe net doth take him, and he doth plucke

plucke him, vntill he leaue him not a feather to flie with.

Verſe 6. *The gathering of treaſures by a deceitfull tongue, is vanity toſſed to, and fro, of them that ſeeke death.*

THe gathering of treaſures by a deceitfull tongue] Wealth, and ſubſtance how much ſoeuer, gotten by lying, or deceit, or other abuſe of the tongue, and conſequently, by any vnlawfull meanes whatſoeuer, *is vanity*, nothing worth, and will doe him no good that ſo commeth by it, *toſſed to and fro*, is as chaffe or ſuch like matter blowen vp and downe by the winde, *of them that ſeeke death*, that is, they that doe in ſuch ſort gather riches, doe ſeeke death, either of their ſoules, or bodies, or both, though they intend it not, nor be willing of it: and it is a certaine effect which ſuch iniuſtice doth neceſſarily produce. Therefore as the wiſe man in the ſentence going before, hath commended painefull diligence, as a direct and lawfull meanes for the attaining vnto wealth, ſo in this hee condemneth falſhood, and ſhifting, and that by three argu-
Pſal.62.10. ments. Firſt, becauſe that which they get thereby, is *vanity*, it doth their bodies no good: it doth their ſoules no good; it doth their names no good; it doth their poſterity no good: God doth not bleſſe it to their reliefe, they haue no protection, or good ſafetie from it, their hearts thereby are not refreſhed with any ſound comfort: they are nothing furthered toward euerlaſting life by the poſſeſſion of it: no true honour and eſtimation doth accompany it: and their children moſt
Pro.23.5. commonly are hurt, and not benefited by that which is no better gotten. Secondly, becauſe it is vnſtable, and vaniſhable, as vncertaine as duſt, whereof one blaſt of winde wil blow away great heapes: it is ſubiect to fire, to theeues, to loſſes, to deceitfull bargainers, to ſuites of law, to Gods curſe, which hath innumerable meanes in a readines to waſte, and conſume them. Thirdly, becauſe it is dangerous and hurtfull, tending to the ruine of the getters, and owners, as will appeare euidently in the next verſe.

Verſe 7.

Verſe 7. *The robberie of the wicked ſhall deſtroy them, becauſe they refuſe to doe iudgement.*

THe *robberie of the wicked*] That theeuery which they commit againſt others, and the goods gotten thereby, *ſhall deſtroy them*, the Hebrew word ſignifieth, may come of a roote which ſignifieth to terrifie, and feare, and likewiſe to dwell, and ſtay with, and ſo it importeth that their puniſhment ſhall be both terrible, and continuall, it will both affright, and diſmay them, and not be gone in haſte but abide with them, and ſticke faſt vnto them: or elſe of a word that ſignifieth to ſawe, cut in two, or cut downe, intending the finiall deſtruction and ouerthrow of them; *becauſe they refuſe to doe iudgement*, his purpoſe is then to confirme the laſt clauſe of the laſt ſentence, and to proue that falſhood, and iniuſtice is moſt pernicious, and hurtfull, which he ſheweth firſt by the effects of it, and then by the cauſe: the effect is vtter vndoing, and that as any man is greedy to inrich himſelfe by iniurious, and wrongfull dealing, ſo faſt he haſteneth, to his owne ruine, and ouerthrow: *For they that will be rich fall into temptation, and ſnares, and into many fooliſh, and noyſome luſts, which drowne men in perdition, and deſtruction. For the deſire of money is the roote of all euill, which while ſome haue luſted after, they erred from the faith, and pierced themſelues thorow with many ſorrowes.* 1.Tim.6.9.10. Oft it commeth to paſſe that life is taken away for it, or their bodies hurt or wounded: but alway the ſoule is plagued, and ſubiect to perill of damnation: malefactors that are taken robbing by the high way ſide with the purſe in his hands: or breaking vp the houſe with their hands in the cheſts, are not ſo ſure to be condemned of the Iudge, and ſtrangled by the executioner, as theſe are to receiue ſentence of the Lord, and periſh by his iuſtice; vnleſſe they conuert with holie humiliation, and ſo he pardon them in mercie. There is no poyſon being ſwallowed will more certainely deſtroy nature, then oppreſſion and wrongfulnes, will damne the ſoule; *Zapher*, in the booke of *Iob* ſpake moſt truely to this point

saying, *his meate in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aspes within him. He hath swallowed downe substance, but he shall vomit it vp againe: God shall cast them out of his belly. He shall sucke the poyson of Aspes, the Vipers tongue shall slay him.*

Iob.20.15.16.

The cause is the manner of their sinning, *they refuse to execute iudgement*, they faile not thorow frailty and infirmity, but chuse to offend wittingly, and willingly, with stubbornnes, and obstinacy which make their faults the more intollerable, their offences more vnpardonable, and their punishment more grieuous, and insufferable.

Verse 8. *The way of a man is peruerse and strange; but of the pure his worke is right.*

THE *way*] The manners, the life, and conuersation of *a man*, of a wicked man, and such a one as is impure *is peruerse*, sinfull, and crooked, sweruing from all equity, and right, *and strange*, nothing agreeable to the order that God himselfe hath prescribed in his word, and his children doe allow, and obserue, *but of the pure*, who is purged, and washed from the guilt of his sinnes by the blood of Christ, God pardoning them all thorow the merite of his sonne: and who is sanctified, and cleansed from the filthines of his owne nature, and corruptions by the spirit of grace: and who also vpon the hope of saluation, is carefull as much as he can to purge himselfe, *his worke*, his actions, speeches and course of all his behauiour; *is right*, sincere, and faithfull, conformable to Gods will, and referred to his glory, not deceitfull, not variable, not crooked, nor in any word vnreformed. Herein therefore the holy Ghost declareth the contrariety that is betweene the godly and the wicked, the one doing nothing but that which is euill, either notoriously, or otherwise thorow hidden fraud, and guile; the other nothing but that which is good, either in practise, or desire, whereof when he faileth, it is through infirmity, and weakenes: for they vse the fashion of two contary countries, the one heauenly, the other earthly: and performe their seruices in two contrary Princes: the one to Satan, the other

other to the Lord, and are gouerned and ruled by two contrary lawes, the one of God, the other of the fleſh.

Verſe 9. *It is better for a man to dwell in the corner of an houſe top: then with a contentious woman in an wide houſe.*

IT *is better*] More eaſe, and quiet for a man, *to dwell* euen alone without company, *in a corner of the houſe top*, in a moſt inconuenient place, yea though it doe not only want neceſſary roome, but alſo ſubiect to the heate of the ſummer, the colde of the winter, the force of the winde, the beating of the raine: (for he alludeth to the manner of their buildings, which were with ſlate roofes, as moſt Churches, Caſtles, and Towers are with vs; being therefore delectable places to walke vpon, but not commodious roomes for lodging and continuall abode eſpecially, when one ſhall be penned vp in an angle or narrow corner thereof) *then with a contentious woman*, then with a woman giuen to brawling and chiding, *in a wide houſe*, in a very large, profitable, and pleaſant roome to dwell in. And by this is ſignified, that albeit wedlocke, and a married eſtate be deſirable and full of comfort to fit, and well matched yoke-fellowes, yet nothing is more vnpleaſant and tedious, then that is to him who longeth for peace, and is ſuted with contentions, who ſought a wife for the ioy, and refreſhing of his heart, and hath met with a tormentor continually to vexe him; this is the greateſt outward croſſe, becauſe it is the neereſt, and like to a diſeaſed member, which will continually put a man to paine: which more remote commodities and benefits cannot eaſilie counteruaile; a great houſe ſounding with brawles, and chidings, will bring little contentment to a peaceable minde ſo tediouſly diſquieted.

Verſe 10. *The ſoule of the wicked deſireth euill, his neighbour findeth no fauour in his eyes.*

THe *ſoule*,] The very heart, and affections *of the wicked wiſheth euill*, miſchiefe, and hurt to all but himſelfe, he is ſo

kindled with enuy, *and his neighbour*, he that dwelleth by him, meaning alſo thereby any other: for he that doth not good to thoſe that be about him, is hardly drawne to profit others, *hath no fauour in his eyes*, findeth no friendſhip at his hands, neither the ſight of his preſence can moue him to loue, nor the ſight of his calamity can moue him to commiſeration: there is no pitty nor compaſſion in his eyes, whereby he ſhould be incited to doe good, no not ſo much as kindneſſe, to giue a good countenance, vnleſſe it be with diſſimulation, or to ſuch as are like to himſelfe. So that we may know that it is the propertie of wicked men to be vnmerciful, & hard hearted, eſpecially to ſuch as feare God: ſuch as his ſoule is, ſuch likewiſe is his eye: and ſuch as his eye is, ſuch likewiſe is hand, his tongue, his eare, and euery part of his body. As other ſinnes increaſe: whether it be lying, luſt, ſwearing, or any impiety, or any vnrighteouſnes, ſo doth cruelty with them, becauſe ſelfe loue is ſtrong in all ſinfull perſons, that filleth the place of all Chriſtian, and brotherly loue, and leaueth no roome for the ſame in their hearts: moreouer pride aboundeth alway with it, which begetteth enuy, and maketh men vncharitable: neither are they free from the ſting of a guilty conſcience, which maketh them fierce and inhumane: and as they are priuy to themſelues, that they deſerue not to be beloued of any, ſo will they requite it by louing of none: and who knoweth not, but that the deuill is their father, and maſter, who will haue them all to beare his image, and be like to himſelfe, and alway compell them to ſerue his turne. Yet it is true, that ſometimes the worſt are made profitable, and helpefull to the beſt: but that proceedeth not from their diſpoſition ſo much as from Gods power, and prouidence who hath the commandement of their hearts, and hands, their lips, and ſubſtance. It is not the nature of the hard rocke to ſend forth water; and yet when the Lord cauſed it ſo to doe to the people in the wildernes, they inioyed the benefit of it. It is not the nature of the Rauen to prouide food for men, but to deuoure all her ſelfe, yet when the Lord appointed one to miniſter food vnto *Elias*, ſhe failed not a meale. It was not the cuſtome of the Egyptians to bee

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louing and kinde to the Iſraelites: yet when the Lord moued their hearts, and ſent a qualme of kindneſſe vpon them, they were ready to impouriſh themſelues, and to depart with the beſt Iewels they had, to beſtow vpon them.

Verſ. 11. *When the ſcorner is puniſhed, the ſimple is made wiſe: and when the wiſe is inſtructed, hee receiueth knowledge.* See chap. 19. 23.

Verſ. 12. *He inſtructeth the wiſe by the houſe of the wicked, which ouerthroweth the wicked in their euill.*

HE *inſtructeth*] The Lord giueth examples as cleere as precepts to them, that haue true wiſedome, and his feare in their hearts; and bringeth them thereby to a iudicious meditation of his iuſtice, and their owne deſeruings, and cauſeth them to profit to their owne repentance, and reformation of their liues, by conſideration of his righteouſnes, who might haue plagued them as well as others: and of his mercie, goodnes, and patience, who hath laid his ſtrokes vpon others, and ſpared them, *by the houſe of the wicked* by the feareſull ſtrokes that light vpon the wicked themſelues, their ſtates, habitations, families, and poſteritie (for ſo farre doth houſe extend ſometimes in the Scripture) *which ouerthroweth the wicked in their euill*, which ruinateth, and bringeth to naught euill and ſinful men, for their rebellious and vngodly behauiour againſt him: ſo that the ſeueritie of God, and his greateſt plagues againſt godleſſe men, are very vſefull, and many waies profitable to them that haue ſound wiſedome and vnderſtanding. The Prophet acknowledged this to the Lord for his praiſe, and teſtimonie, of his peoples vprightnes, ſaying, *With my ſoule haue I deſired thee in the night, yea with my ſpirit within me, I will ſeeke thee earely: for ſeeing thy iudgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world ſhall learne righteouſnes.* For God doth ſtrike a few for the inſtruction of many, and would haue all his attributes to be thought of, though but one, or a few doe moſt eminently worke, notwithſtanding his iuſtice is moſt ſeene: yet his truth forethreatning ſuch plagues as are

Eſai. 26. 11.
1. Cor. 10. 11.

inflicted, are not to be passed by without reuerence, his power is manifested, whereby he is able to bring downe his proud aduersaries: and so his loue, his mercie, and faithfulnes to his owne, is much magnified by preseruing of them, when their aduersaries, and his, do fall into such miserie and mischiefe.

Verse 13. *He that stoppeth his eare at the crying of the poore, he shall crie himselfe and not be heard.*

HE *that stoppeth his eare at the crying of the poore,*] That he may not heare, but turneth away himselfe, and his compassion, from them, when they crie to him for reliefe, *he shall also crie,* shall fall into such miserie as shall make him crie, earnestly call vpon, and intreate God, and man, and therein bee helplesse without fauour of God, or man: *and not be heard,* be neuer a whit the better for it: which punishment also is due vnto, and shall be executed vpon such as turne their eare from hearing those, that do relate the state of the poore vnto thē; or though they doe heare it, yet little regard it: or which turne their eyes from beholding the afflictions and miseries of their brethren; or if they looke vpon them, will doe nothing for them: as our Sauiour complaineth of them that saw him hungrie in his members, but *fed him not.* All commeth to this, that merciless men shall receiue no mercie. For it is iust with God so to punish them, which neither regard his commandement, nor his people, nor the members of his Sonne, nor their owne flesh, as poore distressed men are called by the Prophet.

Matth.25.
Iam.3.13.
Iob.31.19.
Esai.58.7.

Vers. 14. *A gift in secret pacifieth anger, and a reward in bosome strong wrath.*

A *Gift*] Giuen, and receiued also of any, either high or low, offended with thee, *in secret,* closely & secretly giuen, *pacifieth anger,* conceiued against a man, and *a reward in the bosome,* carried in the bosome, and so giuen to another man, pacifieth, and stilleth mighty and raging wrath. His drift is therefore to shew, that gifts preuaile much with those that

receiue

receiue them, and worke a great impreſſion in their affections. Prou. 17.8. Becauſe men naturally are poſſeſſed with a deſire of hauing, and 18.16. and therefore that is acceptable to them which may encreaſe their ſubſtance. And becauſe the bringing of preſents, eſpecially to one offended, and moued with indignation, is a teſtimonie of ſubmiſſion, whereby the partie conceiuing diſpleaſure is after a ſort honoured, which will worke as much vpon a great mind, as the valew of the thing beſtowed will vpon a greedie mind, and therefore either for one cauſe or other it is accepted.

Verſ. 15. *It is ioy to the iuſt to doe iudgement: but deſtruction ſhall be to the workers of iniquitie.*

IT *is ioy to the iuſt*] The godly and righteous man taketh great delight and pleaſure, *to doe iudgement*, to deale righteouſly with God, and iuſtly with men, and to be vpright in all his actions: a good man hath his greateſt comfort in well doing. The example of our Sauiour, the beſt, is both a paterne and worker of this: and he teſtifyeth thus of himſelfe: *My meate is to do the will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his worke.* Ioh. 4.34. Gal. 5. For as goodneſſe is the fruit of the ſpirit, ſo is ioy alſo, and a companion of goodneſſe. Moreouer the ſeruices of Chriſtians are not enforced by compulſion, but performed with loue, and whatſoeuer loue doth, it doth it cheerfully and gladly: and adde hereunto that hope hath a great hand in the workes of the righteous, and that doth with all gladneſſe and comfort waite for a reward, accounting all good workes which are done in earth, to bee certaine treaſures layed vp in heauen, ſo that well doers in the kingdome of grace, haue ioy mixed with their righteouſneſſe, and in the kingdome of glory are aſſured they ſhall haue ioy giuen them for their righteouſneſſe. Rom. 14.17. Howbeit this ioy is either more or leſſe, according to the degree of their grace; the beſt feele moſt, thoſe which haue leſſe faith doe that which is good with leſſe delight: all doe obey God with ſome gladneſſe, but none with perfection of gladneſſe, becauſe there is not a perfection of mortification.

So much naturall corruption as remaineth, so farre a man is hindred from this alacritie and cheerfulneſſe, which euen that worthie Apoſtle found in himſelfe, which hee alſo confeſſeth, ſaying: *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man: but I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, bringing me into captiuity vnto the law of ſinne, which is in my members.* *But deſtruction*, eternall perdition both of ſoule and body, with manifold perils and calamities, foregoing the ſame, *ſhall be for the workers of iniquity*, becauſe it is their conſtant and common practiſe, their trade and profeſſion: for there is great difference betweene the working of iniquitie, and to be a *worker of iniquity*, the one may ſometimes befall a Saint; the other is alway proper to a ſinner: So that this then he meaneth, that wickedneſſe in time will vtterly vndoe the wicked: as the Pſalmiſt confeſſeth, ſaying: *When the wicked ſpring like graſſe, and all the workers of iniquity flouriſh, they ſhall be deſtroyed for euer.* For all the threatnings of God are againſt them, and all the attributes of God are againſt them, his truth, his anger, his iuſtice, and his power. &c. Here is ſomewhat more to be vnderſtood then is expreſſed in both the ſtraines, the reward of the godly for their goodneſſe is concealed in the former; and the propenſion of the wicked to euill in the latter: the oppoſition therefore ſtandeth thus: *It is ioy for the iuſt to doe iudgement*, and he ſhall obtaine ſaluation: *but it is ioy for the workers of iniquitie* to do miſchiefe, and therefore they ſhall be deſtroyed.

Rom.7.22.

Pſal.92.7.

Verſ. 16. *The man that wandreth out of the way of vnderſtanding, ſhall remaine in the congregation of the dead.*

THe man that wandreth] Which followeth his owne carnall reaſon, or ſenſuall luſts, which liueth according to the courſe of the world, walking after the fleſh, and not after the ſpirit, and ſo *goeth out of the way of vnderſtanding*, out of the courſe that Gods wiſedome hath preſcribed, *ſhall remaine*, ſhall haue an euerlaſting abode without all hope, or poſſibility of recouerie, *in the congregation of the dead*, amongſt that great

Rom.8.

great number of people that are dead already, both in ſoule, and body, or elſe through their wickedneſſe make haſt to the ſame. This ſentence by a compariſon taken from trauellers, containeth a deſcription of the condition of the wicked: firſt, their behauiour is reſembled to a voyage, which is altogether in aberration and by-paths: and ſecondly, the ſucceſſe of the ſame to the end of a iourney, very vncomfortable, like vnto a Iayle, or houſe of correction full of malefactors, being vpon the racke, or otherwiſe tormented: yea rather hanging vpon the gallowes, as he alſo muſt do with them for company. And his intent is to ſhew that there is no paſſage to ſaluation or happineſſe but by the word of God. The whole firſt Pſalme is ſpent in this argument, declaring two kinds of men, two oppoſite waies, two contrary eſtates: for the way of the word is pleaſing to God, and wilfull wandring out of it is abominable vnto him; the one hath the promiſes, and is bleſſed; the other hath the threatnings, and is curſed.

That hath the ſpirit of God to guide them that walke in it; the other the world, the fleſh, and the diuell to deceiue the paſſengers: that hath Chriſt for the gate to let men in; the other hath Chriſt to be the Porter to barre them out. And becauſe companie is delightfull, and men doe moſt willingly trauell where are moſt companions; and ſociety in euill doth ſeeme to promiſe ſafety vnto it, or at leaſt to mittigate the penaltie, if they may haue others to ſuffer with them; he doth purpoſely aggrauate this puniſhment. By relating the multitude of them that are ſo puniſhed, the Prophet *Eſay* doth the like: *And they ſhall be afraid, anguiſh and ſorrow ſhall take them, and they ſhall haue paine as a woman that trauelleth: euery one ſhall be amazed at his neighbour, and their faces ſhall bee like flames of fire.* Iſai. 13. 8. And for the like purpoſe our Sauiour vſeth a parable in the Goſpell, bringing in this for one miſery to come vpon the hypocrites at the end of the world; that like *tares*, they ſhall be *bound together* in bundles, and caſt *into the fire* to bee *burnt*. Mat. 13. 30.

Verſ. 17.

Verſ. 17. *He that loueth pleaſure ſhall be a poore man, and he that loueth wine and oyle ſhall not be rich.*

HE *that loueth pleaſure*] Who cannot moderate himſelfe in the vſe of recreations, but too much affecteth them, and immoderately followeth them, to the ſatisfying of his fleſhly delight, *ſhall be a poore man*, though hee were neuer ſo rich before: *and hee that loueth wine and oyle*, or fat things, (for the word ſignifieth as well fatneſſe, as oyle) *ſhall not bee rich*, either ſhall not attaine vnto wealth, or if hee doe, hee is not like long to continue wealthie.

Sbemen.

The ſcope is to ſhew, that voluptuous perſons take the way to bring themſelues to penurie: euen lawfull delights, when they be exceſſiue, turne to be ſins, and cauſes of miſery. Saint *Iames* teacheth, that the earth is not a place, and conſequently that this life is not a time, *to liue in pleaſure:* but that is to be referred till reſt be giuen from labours, for a reward in heauen after this life. The Lord in wiſedome doth purſue this ſinne with the penaltie of pouerty for diuers cauſes: as one, becauſe it is due, and proportionable to their courſes; they fruitleſly ſpend their time, and is not equall that they ſhould bee reſtrained from wealth and ſubſtance, which is the fruit of time well ſpent. They offer violence to the good gifts and creatures of God, by riotous and waſtfull deuouring of them; and therefore it is equall the good gifts and creatures of God ſhould be deliuered out of their hands, to ſerue for the vſe of others which will vſe them better. Bee they reprobates that liue in this ſin? need and want is the fitteſt rod to make them ſmart, whoſe happineſſe conſiſteth in luxurie, and bellie cheere; are they elect, and ſuch are reclaimable? a better meanes cannot bee found to helpe them to repentance, then to put them to drinke a potion of ſorrow and paine; of hunger and thirſt; of cold, and raggedneſſe; who ſurfeited before with delights, eaſe, and abundance.

Iam. 5. 5.

Verſ. 18.

Verſ. 18. *The wicked ſhall be a ranſome for the righteous, and the tranſgreſſor for the vpright.*

The wicked ſhall be a ranſome for the righteous] viz. Many times it falleth out that when the godly are in trouble, or in perill, they eſcape out of the ſame and be preſerued, and the whole burthen thereof fall vpon the backe of their enemies, or ſome euill doers, vpon whom God doth inflict that which man had prepared for the hurt of the righteous: as is plaine by the example of the Egyptians who were drowned, that the Iſraelites might bee deliuered; and of *Haman* hanged, that *Mordecaie* might bee freed. It is a word borrowed from the Leuiticall Law, wherein gifts were giuen, or ſacrifices offered, or oblations conſecrated. Sometimes for mens ſoules, for remiſſion of ſinnes, not for the merits of the worke, but for the merits of Chriſt, who was figured in thoſe ſacrifices: ſometimes for the exchange, and buying out of thoſe things which were deſtinated to ſacred vſes. This proceedeth from the loue which God beareth to his people, whom hee incomparably preferreth before the vngodly, more then men are eſteemed aboue beaſts: who would not kill a dog, to ſaue the life of the child? *Abraham* was glad to ſacrifice a Ramme in ſtead of *Iſaac* his ſonne. And if *Iacob* might haue recouered *Ioſeph* for a ſwine, or a Goat, would hee not moſt willingly haue giuen them for him? This verſe agreeth wholly in ſenſe with the 8. verſe of the eleuenth chapter. *Copher.* Iſai. 3. 4.

Verſ. 19. *It is better to dwell in a wilderneſſe, then with a contentious and angry woman.*

THe deſart is a very incommodious and vncomfortable place to dwell in: for therein good things are wanting, and euils abounding. The Iſraelites found this true by their experience, who in the deſart not onely wanted food, and drinke, but were ſtung with Serpents. Neuertheleſſe it is more tollerable to abide in the wilderneſſe among venomous creatures,

tures, and wild beasts, then to dwell in neuer so faire or plentifull an house, with a brawling and vnquiet woman: for shee by her words and dealings will both prouoke a man to griefe, then any beare, or serpent. As in the ninth verse of this Chapter.

Vers. 20. *There is a treasure to bee desired, and oyle in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man spendeth it vp.*

THere is a treasure to be desired, and oyle in the house of the wise] In the habitation of the prudent housholder, there is layed vp store of all things which are necessarie and delectable, and hereby he doth commend the liberality and bountie of God towards those or his seruants, who apply their vnderstanding, and other gifts to godlinesse, and frugality. Hee doth allow sufficient both for necessity and delight to them that be thriftie and godly: as that holy seruant of God acknowledgeth vpon comfortable experience, saying: *Thou*
Psal. 23. 5. *dost prepare a table before mee in the sight of mine aduersaries, thou dost annoint my head with oyle, and my cup runneth ouer.* Because he is rich enough and hath plentie of all creatures, for beasts, and birds, and fishes, and all manner of vnreasonable creatures; yea for wicked men also, which are baser then any of these; and it pleaseth him so to recompence that piety and
Psal. 112. godlines which is in his seruants, and likewise their diligence, painfulnesse and prudence: and he maketh them his granarie and store-house, for the relieue of many other his distressed people: *compassion is in their eyes*, when they see their brethren in need, they *distribute* and communicate to the *poore*, if they haue it, he knoweth they will faithfully dispense that which is put into their hands, and therefore putteth them in trust to be his coferers. True it is that all haue not great abundance, but many are kept within a shorter tedder, and the Lord dieteth them, that they should not surfeit with excesse: for too much would make them too high minded, and too worldly minded: but no good man hath too little, and want of competence, according to the prayer of the holy man, in the 30. chapter, and

eighth

eighth verſe. For a ſmall ſubſtance is bleſſed by God for great vſe: as was the widdowes caſe with her *cruſe of oyle, and barrell of meale:* and as is promiſed in the Pſalme, *a ſmall thing to the righteous, is better then great riches to the wicked. But a fooliſh man ſpendeth it vp:* The vnthriftie perſon either ſpendeth as faſt as hee getteth, and ſo can neuer keepe ſtore together, or elſe by his prodigality, lauiſhing out his great patrimonie, and great ſubſtance left him of his parents, becommeth bankeroupt. See verſ. 17. of this chapter. Pſal. 37. 6.

Verſ. 21. *He that followeth after righteouſneſſe and mercy, findeth life, righteouſneſſe and honour.*

THis is the property of a godly man that hee followeth after *righteouſneſſe and mercy*, or kindneſſe; that is to ſay, hee doth not ſlackly ſeeke after, but enſue with earneſtneſſe thoſe two vertues which are moſt excellent, and vnder which all other are contained: the former of theſe is *righteouſneſſe*, which is that vertue whereby that which is due is performed: the latter is mercy, whereby good is done of a merciſull and kind affection. Hee that thus ſeeketh after theſe two vertues, ſhall finde theſe three iewels, and ſingular rewards: the firſt of theſe is *life*, that is, length of daies in this world, with all manner of comfortable bleſſings: the ſecond is *righteouſneſſe*, as good as, or better meaſure from the Lord, and men, then hee obſerued in his dealings. The laſt is *honour*, that is to ſay, glory, both in heauen and earth, before the Almighty, and before the faithfull: yea and ſomtimes with the tongues, but commonly with the hearts and conſciences of the wicked.

Verſ. 22. *A wiſe man ſcaleth the city of the mighty, and caſteth downe the ſtrength of the confidence thereof.*

A *Wiſe man*] Who is qualified with ſound iudgement and diſcretion, *ſcaleth*, as a conquerour aſſaulteth, and winneth *the city of the mighty*, the fort and hold which mighty men poſſeſſe, and keepe the walles and bulwarkes of it, wherein

in they much truſted, thinking themſelues thereby to bee in ſafety. He meaneth that wiſedome is more excellent then ſtrength, and that in controuerſies and ſtrifes: it helpeth more to the victorie to be prudent then puiſſant, according to the teſtimonie of the Wiſe man ſolemnly profeſſed: *I ſay better is wiſedome then ſtrength: though the wiſedome of the poore bee deſpiſed, and his words not heard.* For a man endued with wiſedome ſhall beſt find out equity, and be moſt ready to find out a good cauſe: and he will beſt diſcerne of his aduantages, and find out fit meanes for the managing of his matters. A weake man that hath the benefit of ſight, will be too hard for a Giant that is blind: and how commeth it to paſſe that a little man can maſter a great beaſt? but that the reaſon of the one preuaileth more then the power of the other.

Eccleſ.9.16.

Verſ.23. *Who ſo keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his ſoule from troubles.*

WHo ſo keepeth his mouth] Taketh heed to his words, and is conſiderate in all his ſpeeches, not to be mute, when he ought to ſpeake, nor then to ſpeake when it becommeth him to be ſilent, nor raſhly vttereth any thing that may be vnfit or vnſeaſonable, or any way for his diſaduantage, *keepeth his ſoule*, himſelfe and his life from troubles, from that griefe, and thoſe afflictions, which vnaduiſed men doe caſt themſelues into by the miſgouernment of their tongues. See chap. 13. 3. and our note vpon that place.

Verſ.24. *Proud, and ſtubborne ſcorner is his name, whom in his furie worketh pride.*

THat is to ſay, he publikely is branded with many titles of reproch, as with the name of a *proud* man, one that is high minded, and vain-glorious; and of a *ſtubborne* perſon, that is, ſtomackfull, and very wilfull: and of a *ſcorner*, one that is a contemner and derider of all others beſide himſelfe, and indeed a very euill and peſtilent man, (for the word commonly is taken (as in the firſt Pſalme, and other places) for him that

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is deſperately wicked,) *who in his furie worketh pride*, either by doing at that time ſome preſumptuous action, or elſe by vttering ſome inſolent ſpeeches; for many being angry becauſe their commandements are not obeyed, their deſires fulfilled; that they may make their power knowne, perſecute ſuch as reſiſt them, or attempt high matters in the pride of their heart. So did *Lamech* when he boaſted, *that he would ſlay a man in his wound*: *Dathan*, and *Abiram* when they roſe againſt *Moſes*: *Nabuchadnezzar* when he blaſphemed God, ſaying to *Shadrach*, *Meſhech*, and *Abednego*, *Who is that God that ſhall deliuer you out of mine hand?* and afterward caſt them into the *fiery furnace*: and *Herod*, when in his rage, for being defeated of *Chriſt* did maſſacre the little infants.

Verſ. 25. *The deſire of the ſlothfull ſlayeth him: for his hands refuſe to labour.*

THe *deſire of the ſlothfull*] The things which hee deſireth, and cannot obtaine, *ſlayeth him*, grieueth him at the hart, and almoſt killeth him: for they that will ſpare themſelues from needfull and Chriſtian paines, ſhall bring vpon themſelues hurtfull and ſhamefull paines, miſerie ſhall purſue, and want will bring them to deaths doore: *for his hands refuſe to labour*, he doth nothing but wiſh, but vſeth not the meanes to prouide for himſelfe, and therefore muſt needs periſh. The fault is not layed vpon his debility, but vpon his wretchleſnes. They are not to bee charged for idle perſons which cannot worke, but which will not, for againſt ſuch dealt the Apoſtle, 2. Theſ. 3. 16. that *if any would not worke, they ſhould not eate*.

Verſe 26. *He coueteth greedily all the day long, but the righteous giueth and ſpareth not.*

HEe] The ſluggard mentioned in the former verſe: (for he doth inſiſt in the ſame matter) *coueteth greedily all the day long*, he vehemently luſteth after other mens goods; from time to time, and inceſſantly, liuing both vncomfortably to himſelfe,

himselfe, and vnprofitably to others: for hee doth no good that others might be benefited: nor getteth any good that himselfe might be relieued. So that hee noteth the slothfull persons of all others, to be most insatiably couetous. Their thoughts are ranging abroad, and surueying of euery mans estate, with a longing desire to haue, as much as, or more then the best: and the practises of many do conuince them of this, and for instance that of gamesters, who would win all the money in the world, if their skill and good hap would serue: they would not spare their deerest friends, but rob them of all that they are worth, if the dice, and cards would giue them the aduantage thereto. How many inuiting guests vnto their table vnder pretence of kindnes, doe make them buy their meate dearely, and pay an vnreasonable shot for it, before they depart? sometimes threefold: sometimes seuen fold: sometimes ten fold: sometime twenty fold, and more then their dinner was worth. And doe not guests inuited very often requite the same vnto those, who in good will haue entertained them, and with great charges made them good cheare: they doe not only deuoure their host his meate, but as cruelly as theeues, bereaue him of all his money, that the family fare the worse for their comming seauen yeares after? See Chapter 13. vers. 4.

But the righteous giueth: vnto the sluggard is opposed one that is truly diligent, and faithfull in his calling, whom he seeth as contrary to the other in diuers respects: as first that he is righteous and iust, whereas that lasie sluggard is wicked and vniust: *he is liberal,* (for he giueth to them that are in distresse) whereas the other is hard hearted, and rauenous not ready to bestow any thing, but violent, in his desire to get that, which his neighbours haue: he is of good estate, and able to continue his liberalitie, *he spareth* not, either through niggardlines, or through necessitie to minister reliefe to them that want: the other is beggarly, and so farre from sufficiencie to yeeld help to his brethren, that he is burthensome to them, and lieth as a charge vpon them. This good estate of the godly man is
Psal. 112. 9. described by the Prophet in the Psalmes, saying, *He hath dispersed and giuen to the poore, his righteousnes endureth for e-*

uer,

ner, and a reaſon thereof is aſſigned, *becauſe he meaſureth his affaires by iudgement*. And the Apoſtle, according to this text, doth perſwade men to bee laborious, that they may the better exerciſe liberalitie, ſaying, *Let him that ſtole, ſteale no more, but labour with his hands the thing that is good, that he may giue to him that needeth*. Ephes 4.29.

Verſ. 27. *The ſacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord: how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind.*

THE *ſacrifice of the wicked*] That ſeruice whatſoeuer which they pretend to performe to God: whether prayer, thankſgiuing, or ought elſe, *is abomination*, very offenſiue and diſpleaſing *to the Lord*; and therefore alſo reiected of him, as a hainous ſinne. See chap. 15.8. *how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked minde?* when hee intended to effect ſome miſchiefe, vnder pretext and colour of deuotion, and for the eaſier effecting of his wicked purpoſe: as *Balaam*, and *Balaae* did, when they intended to curſe the people of God: and as *Abſalom* who with the ſhew of performing a vow at Hebron, conſpired againſt *Dauid*, and raiſed vp rebellion againſt his owne father: and as the Phariſies did, *who vnder the pretence of long prayers, deuoured widowes houſes*: ſuch was the faſt appointed by *Iezabel*, and ſolemnized by the Iezralites, to murder *Naboth*: and the people alſo in *Eſaies* time, *who faſted for ſtrife and debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſſe*; ſuch were the ſermons of them alſo, whom *Paul* charged to haue *preached Chriſt of ennie, and to adde to his bands*. Eſai. 58.4. Phil. 15.16.

Verſ. 28. *A falſe witneſſe ſhall periſh: but he that heareth, ſpeaketh conſtantly.*

A *falſe witnes*] A vaine perſon, who teſtifieth things which he neuer heard, or ſaw, witneſſeth lyes: (for lyes are vntruths, and deuiſed by the braine of ſome deceitfull perſon or other) *ſhall periſh*: for being intrapped in his ſpeech, or puniſhed by the Magiſtrate, or the Lord himſelfe, he ſhall be put to

ſilence, with ſhame, or cut off from the earth, ſhall not liue, or at leaſt haue no hearing for his lyes any longer time: for his inſtability and doubling will bring him out of credit at leaſt, if not deſtruction. See Chap.19.verſ.5.9. *But he that heareth* the truth of matters knowing alſo the ſame, and being as it were, an eye witnes; (for he putteth one ſenſe for ſundry) *ſpeaketh conſtantly*, telleth the ſame tale alwayes and in all places, when he is called thereto, whereſoeuer, whenſoeuer, and before whom ſoeuer. *Paul* was the ſame man, when he made a ſpeech to the chiefe captaine, and to *Felix*, and vnto *Feſtus*, and vnto *Agrippa*. See Chap.12.19. The oppoſition ſtandeth thus; *A falſe witnes* vttereth matters which he neuer heard himſelfe, and therefore *ſhall periſh*, or haue his mouth ſtopped: *but a faithfull witneſſe* ſpeaketh nothing but that hee heareth himſelfe, or hath certaine knowledge of, and therefore ſhall ſcape deſtruction, *and ſpeake conſtantly*.

Verſe 29. *A wicked man hardneth his face; but as for the vpright, he directeth his way.*

A *Wicked man hardeneth his face*] The vngodly perſon goeth on in his ſinning without ſhame, or returning backe: the ſeate of baſhfulnes is in the face, ſo that whereas he ſaith, *he hardeneth his face*, it muſt be vnderſtood that he either defendeth his ſinne, or excuſeth it, or proceedeth therein without bluſhing. He is likened to a traueller, that ſetteth his face againſt the wind and weather, and goeth on forward in his iourney, whether he be in the way or out of the way, all is one with him. *But as for the iuſt he directeth his way*; for the iuſt man walketh warily and ſoberly in this world, and taketh care, that neither he erre in any of his opinions, nor ſwerue from the law of God in any of his actions: wherefore alſo if he be reproued, or admoniſhed for any thing that is noted to bee amiſſe in him, he reſiſteth not, but amendeth his fault, and as much as in him lieth, frameth himſelfe in the whole courſe of his life, vnto the obedience of the Lords commandements.

Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: The wicked man is impudent,

and therefore careleſſe alſo how he walketh: but the righteous is modeſt and ſhamefaſt, and therefore *directeth his ſteps.*

Verſe 30. *There is no wiſdome, nor vnderſtanding, nor counſell againſt the Lord.*

BY the particulars he meaneth that there is nothing in man, whether wit, policy, or craft, or confederacy, that can infringe the decree of God, or hinder the effect of his purpoſes. For he denieth not that carnall wit, that the ſtreine of wicked mens art, that the depth of ſubtilty, that combinations and coniurations are oppoſed againſt the Lord, with all their power, and plotting, and helliſh practiſes, but they take no place, they nothing preuaile, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *The Lord breaketh the counſell of the heathen, and bringeth to naught the deuices of the people. The counſell of the Lord ſhall ſtand for euer, and the thoughts of his heart throughout all ages.* Pſal. 39. 10. And, *Why doe the heathen rage, and the people murmur in vaine? The Kings of the earth band themſelues, and the Princes are aſſembled together againſt the Lord, and againſt his Chriſt: let vs breake their bands, and caſt their cords from vs. But he that dwelleth in the heauens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall haue them in deriſion.* Pſal. 2. 1. 2. 3. And although ſometimes things ſeeme to be effected by the cunning practiſes of crafty heads againſt God, and godlineſſe, againſt good men, and iuſt cauſes, yet nothing is done by the force of their wit, but onely by the vertue of Gods will, ſometimes for the correction of his people, and ſometimes for their triall, but all for their good, and our glory, as the Apoſtles together apprehended, and acknowledged in that which ſeemed the moſt direfull ſucceſſe which euer ſinfull man found, for the crucifying of the moſt righteous innocent Sauiour of the world. *Doubtleſſe* (ſay they) *againſt thine holy ſonne Ieſus, whom thou hadſt annoynted, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Iſrael gathered themſelues together, to do whatſoeuer thine hand, and thy counſell had determined before to be done.* Act. 4. 27. For how can any thing be of force againſt him, who giueth to all creatures their being, and from

whom men receiue all the faculties of their mind, and ſtrength of their bodies; who foreſeeth all future purpoſes, and deſignements: who aſſigneth to euery man, all the actions that he ſhall effect: who is preſent in euery place with wiſdome and might, to croſſe all aduerſary craft and power.

Verſe 31. *The horſe is prepared for the day of battell: but ſafetie is of the Lord.*

THE *horſe is prepared*] So are weapons alſo, and armour, and ſouldiers that ſhould vſe them; they are muſtred, and they are trained: yet the victory is doubtfull how great ſoeuer the army be, how good ſoeuer the armour is, and how skilfull and valiant ſoeuer the warriers be: *For the King is not ſaued by the multitude of an hoſt, neither is the mighty man deliuered by*
Pſal.33.16.17. *his great ſtrength. A horſe is a vaine helpe, and ſhall not deliuer any by his great ſtrength*: for *ſafety is of the Lord*, hee giueth power to that ſide which ſhall win the field, without need or helpe of their forces: for ſometimes the ſmaller multitude preuaile, and ſometimes the weake ſouldiers preuaile, as the wiſe man by experience obſerued, ſaying, *I returned and ſaw vnder*
Eccleſ.9.11. *the ſunne that the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battell to the ſtrong*. Now it is not *Salomons* intention to limit the point, and reſtraine it to this particular, but his meaning is that the ſucceſſe of euery thing is in Gods hands, and ſtandeth not in the force of the meanes, though neuer ſo lawfull and likely, as it is ſaid, *Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vaine*
Pſal.127.1.2. *that build it: Except the Lord keepe the city, the keeper watcheth in vaine: It is in vaine for you to riſe vp early, and lie downe late*, &c. For though great paines bee taken for riches, yet wealth is from the Lord: though great riches be gotten for the raiſing vp, and ſupportance of a family, yet honor and eſtabliſhment is from the Lord: though counſell be taken, and diligence be vſed, for the following of cauſes, and managing of ſuits, yet the ſentence is from the Lord: though phyſicke be miniſtred, and medicines applied, yet the recouery of health is from the Lord, &c.

CHAPTER. XXII.

Verse 1. *A good name is to be chosen rather then great riches, and loving fauour then siluer and gold.*

Good name,] viz. Reputation, or a good report gotten by good men, for weldoing: (for it is not that commendation which is giuen by the wicked, for doing of that which pleaseth their humour) *is to bee chosen*, by such as loue and feare the Lord, and the fellowship of his Saints, *rather then great riches*, more then any commodities of this life. In the booke of Ecclesiastes, it is preferred before the best *oyntments*, which in those parts were of great value, and were reckoned for treasures, and esteemed with the most pretious things. For a mans credit, and honour is of outward things his best possession. Because it is peculiar to good men; whereas other things in a more plentifull measure, are among the wicked. Hypocrites and sinners may bee applauded: as *Herod*, and the Pharisees were; but it will turne to their perpetuall shame at the last, as *Herod* felt, and the Pharisees were foretold. The deepest hypocrite cannot possiby long retaine his estimation, or at all attaine vnto true praise: for that is neuer separated from a good conscience, forasmuch as it is not of men onely, but of God himselfe, and is alway the perfume of faith, and obedience: and herein it is more excellent then any earthly substance, in that it is so durable and perpetuall: death bereaueth a man of all his goods; they are owned by a new master so soone as soule and body bee separate; but iust praise remaineth still a mans owne: it taryeth behind him in earth, and goeth with him also to heauen, and will most grace him at the last day, at the Iudgement seate of Iesus Christ. It may seeme sometimes to bee abolished, by the malitious slanders, and accusations of wicked men; as

Eccles. 7. 2. Matth. 26. Isai. 39. 2. Prou. 10. 7. Act. 12. Luk. 6. 26. Rom. 2. 29.

Naboths was when hee was defamed as a blaſphemer, and a traitor: but it is obſcured but for a time, as it were clouds comming betweene mens eyes, and the rayes of the ſunne; but it cannot be taken away for euer, no more then clouds can euer keepe the Sunne from ſhining: for they that cannot take away grace, can neuer take away true glory. *Waite on the Lord* (ſaith *Dauid*) *and he ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſſe as light: and thy iudgement as noone day.* *And louing fauour*, that good liking whereby any perſon is acceptable and gratious in the ſight of God and man: *then ſiluer and gold*, then thoſe things that are moſt deſired and coueted after in the world: for it is a great bleſſing from God vpon one cauſe to bee beloued and fauoured of men. This is obſerueable in *Daniel*, in *Ioſeph*, in *Dauid*: & in many others whom the Scripture mentioneth, and eſpecially our Sauiour himſelfe, who is ſaid *to encreaſe in wiſedome, and ſtature, and fauour both with God and men*. By this meanes many benefits are obtained, which otherwiſe could not bee gotten: and much good is done which without this could not be performed: as the preſeruation of the Church by *Heſter* and *Mordecay*: the building of the Temple by *Zerubbabel*: and the repairing of Ieruſalem by *Nehemiah*. The Scriptures abound with examples of this nature.

Pſal.3.3.

Pſal.106.46.

Luk.2.52.

Verſ. 2. *The rich and the poore meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all.*

THe rich] Who for a time hath abounded with wealth, and great plenty, either by his owne getting, or by other mens gifture, or by any ſuch meanes, (whether iuſt, or vnrighteous,) as it hath pleaſed Gods moſt righteous prouidence to direct for that purpoſe, *and the poore*, hee that hath taſted of aduerſity, and drunke of the bitter cup of penurie, *doe meet together*, not all, but ſome, whom the Lord ſometimes ſingleth out from the reſt, of both eſtates, to make them acquainted with both eſtates, doe finde an alteration of their former conditions, the one falling or riſing to that which the other formerly had beene; as paſſengers iourneying from contrary

trary coaſts, doe meet in the mid way, and this man trauelleth thitherwards, from whence that man is lately gone and departed. For no outward eſtate is certainly perpetuall, and vnchangeable, but that falleth out to be true which both *Hannah*, the gratious mother of *Samuel*, and *Mary*, the bleſſed mother of Chriſt did ſing: *They that were full are hired forth for bread, and the hungrie are no more hired.* And, *he hath put downe the mighty from their ſeates, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and ſent away the rich empty.* 1.Sam.2.5. Luk.2.52.53. Riches would be vntollerably admired, if there were a perpetuity of them, ſithence that now being ſo fugitiue they are ſo greedily coueted, and ſo confidently truſted in. And the ſtability of their ſtate which had once gotten the poſſeſſion, ſubſtance would turne to the hurt of their neighbours, who ſhould thereby continually be depriued of the benefits thereof: for if all waters ſhould be dammed vp in a few mens ponds, what would become of the grounds, and cattell of others? On the other ſide, pouerty certaine and continuall, would impaire that cheerfulneſſe which is in labour and diligence, and that thankfulnes for the good ſucceſſe of the ſame: Gods promiſes for earthly bleſſings would not be ſo forcible, nor his power and prouidence ſo cleere and conſpicuous. *And the Lord is the maker of them all*, the maker of the men, the maker of their eſtates, and the maker of that change and alteration which often happeneth, that the one might become grateſull, and the other humble. This parity did rich *Iob* acknowledge to be betweene himſelfe, and his poore vnderlings, his ſeruants, his bondmen. *Did not hee that made me in the womb, make him? and did not one faſhion vs in the wombe?* It is hee then that giueth life, and breath, and reaſon, and being to all: and it is he that allotteth to euery man his portion, ſome to be full, ſome to be empty, ſome to haue much, ſome to be worth little: ſome to be able to giue, ſome to haue need to receiue. If all were rich, the bleſſing would not be ſo acceptable, according as many excellent gifts, being yet common, are not, as fire, light, warmth, water, ayre, &c. Neither would there ſeeme to be ſo much need of prayer for ſubſtance, or the preſeruati-

on thereof. If no man were in want, few men would take
Deut.15.11. paines to trauell for others, if neceſſity did not compell them; and then there would be none to exerciſe mercy vpon. If all were poore, who ſhould be the helpers of them? who ſhould ſupply their wants, and miniſter reliefe vnto them? And who could carrie the countenance, the port, and conſequently the reuerence of magiſtracie, and of publike authority?

Verſ. 3. *A prudent man foreſeeth the euill, and hideth himſelfe: but the ſimple paſſe on, and are puniſhed.*

A *Prudent man*,] He that hath learned holy and heauenly wiſedome, *ſeeth the plague*, foreſeeth ſome iudgement and puniſhment ready to fall vpon himſelfe, or the publike eſtate, which hee diſcerneth by the knowledge of ſins committed, and the due meditation of the threatnings of God againſt the ſame; all which he verily beleeueth will be executed, *and hideth himſelfe*, dealeth like diſcreet perſons, who apprehending by ſight or ſignes ſome tempeſt ariſing, betake themſelues to couert, either in a houſe, or vnder a buſh, or in ſome
Iob 31.1. other commodious and ſafe place of refuge. Spirituall foreſight and preuention of euils, is by auoiding the ſinnes that may bring hurt; or by humbling our ſelues after ſinnes committed, as *Ioſiah* did for himſelfe and the people; and by depending on God alone, without truſting to, or vſing of any euill meanes. *Rachab*, the Gibeonites, and Nineuites, are pregnant examples for this purpoſe: *but the ſimple*, thoſe ſillie and wicked fooles, worſe then witleſſe idiots; which will neither take notice of their iniquities, nor fearing the threatnings of God denounced againſt the ſame, *paſſe on*, in their wicked waies and tranſgreſſions, not ſeeking any ſhelter ſo much as of God himſelfe, *and are puniſhed*, ouertaken with ſome euils, either by curſes in this world, or with condemnation in the world to come: for all obſtinate and impenitent perſons muſt needs bring deſtruction vpon themſelues at the laſt, as the
Pſal.37.38. Scriptures threaten. *The tranſgreſſors ſhall bee deſtroyed together, and the end of the wicked ſhall be cut off.* And, *did not my words*,

words, and my ſtatutes, which I commanded by my ſeruants the Prophets, take hold on your fathers, and they returned and ſaid, As the Lord of hoſts hath determined to do vnto vs, according to our owne waies, and according to our workes, ſo hath hee dealt with vs. And this both in regard of Gods iuſtice, truth, curſe, and oath: in regard of Gods people, who ſhould not bee ſo happie by ſhunning of ſinne, if wicked men might liue therein, and not bee miſerable. *Though a ſinner doe euill an hundred times, and his daies bee prolonged: yet ſurely I know it ſhall bee well with them that feare the Lord, which feare before him.* Zach. 1. 6. Eccleſ. 8. 12.

Verſ. 4. *The reward of humility, and the feare of the Lord, is riches, honour, and life.*

THE *reward*,] Thoſe bleſſings wherwith God doth recompence *humility*, that amiable grace of lowlineſſe, when a man eſteemeth baſely of himſelfe, and thinketh wel of others, and accordingly giuing honour, and not taking of it; *and of the feare of the Lord*, ſound piety and godlineſſe: *is riches*, the plentie of good things, ſo farre as they are ſafe for their ſoules; *honour*, that good name that hath been commended in the firſt verſe; *and life*, a comfortable continuance in this life, vntill they be ripe for another, and then the enioyment of that, with all happineſſe for euer. See chap. 3. 15. and 16. 17.

Verſ. 5. *Thornes and ſnares are in the way of the froward: But he that doth keepe his ſoule ſhall be farre from them.*

THE *Hornes and ſnares*] Moſt grieuous plagues and puniſhments, ſuch as are contrary to the reward promiſed to the humble and godly in the former verſe: the *thornes* of penurie, want, and beggery: the *thornes* of contempt, and the *ſnares* of death, are in *theſe waies* and courſes which he taketh, and that impious and wretched life which hee liueth: for it is the portion of godleſſe men, to goe with miſery to their deſtruction. As the end of *Pharaoh*, *Achab*, *Haman*, and the whole rabble of that helliſh crue doth make the world to ſee.

He

He that doth keepe his ſoule, that hath conſideration of his owne ſaluation and good eſtate: (for it is a part put for the whole) *ſhall bee farre from them*, from ſuch miſeries as hang ouer theſe mens heads, and therefore alſo from thoſe miſdemeanours as pull downe ſuch iudgements vpon them.

Iob.21.15. *Loe* (ſaith *Iob*) *their good is not in their hand, let the counſell of the wicked be farre from me. How oft ſhall the candle of the wicked bee put out? and how oft commeth their deſtruction vpon them: God diſtributeth his anger vpon them.*

Verſ. 6. *Traine vp a child in the way wherein he ſhould walk, and he will not depart from it when he is old.*

Chanoc. Nagnar. *Traine vp a child*] Giue inſtruction vnto him, the manner whereof may bee gathered, not onely by the mention of *child*, but by the ſignification of the Hebrew word, which is as much as if it were ſaid, catechize him, initiate him, enter him (as it were) properly dedicate him, as they did their houſes new built vnto the Lord, informe him therefore according to his capacity in the grounds and principles of religion, admoniſh him alſo of his faults, teach him how to reforme them; rectifie and ſtrengthen him, whiles hee is yet a flexible plant, plucke vp the weedes which yet begin to grow in his heart, while they be young and tender, before they haue taken too much rooting. Saint *Paul* requireth the performance of the ſame duty, ſaying; *Bring vp*, or nurſe vp *your children in the feare of the Lord*. Hee would haue them to ſucke in religion, if not with their mothers milke, yet ſhortly after aſſoone as they are capable of it. Here are two reaſons which may moue men to obey this precept: The firſt is the cauſe thereof, in that vnderſtanding piety, and Chriſtian behauiour, is the way euen of younglings: according to the Prophets teſtimonie,

Pſal.119.9. *Wherewith ſhall a young man*, (the word is the ſame which here we tranſlate child) *Cleanſe his way, in taking heed thereto according to thy word*. Now then ſithence it is ſo, it is good to ſet them on forward in ſo happie a iourney betime in the morning, that they may take the whole day before them.

them. The ſecond is the effect, *hee ſhall not depart therefrom when he is old*, the ſeaſoning of youth doth much confirme piety and goodneſſe in riper yeeres, wherof our *Salomon* himſelfe found the benefit. And ſo did *Timothie*, in whom S. *Paul* apprehended ſo much grace and vertue. This cauſeth memorie long to keepe the print of the firſt ſtampe: and the delights and cuſtomes of youth will not eaſily be extinguiſhed. The vnreaſonable creatures which are tamed when they are young, and from the teates of the damme, continue leſſe wild and fierce then others of the ſame kind, ſo long as they liue. Although this timely teaching doth not in all take this good effect, yet it doth in very many, and is Gods ordinance for the ſame, and the parents exerciſing of it may take this comfort, that they haue obeyed the Lord, and neglected no dutie to their children. Prou. 2. &c. 2. Tim. 3. 14. 15

Verſ. 7. *The rich ruleth ouer the poore, and the borrower is ſeruant to the lender.*

THE *rich ruleth ouer the poore*] Becauſe the poore man ſtandeth in need of the rich, hee that is wealthie becommeth his Lord, vſurping authority, and bearing away the ſway for all matters: for euery thing muſt be as hee will haue it, *and the borrower is ſeruant to the lender*: for hee that goeth a borrowing (as we ſay goeth a ſorrowing:) for he loſeth his liberty, and is many times at his inferiours commandement. They are often feared, and crouched vnto with cap and courteſie, and magnified like young maſters, which haue neither wiſedome, parentage, nor good nature, nor good qualities, nor any thing elſe to adorne them; but only becauſe men are in their debts and danger who are vnworthie to bee ſeruants, (ſo baſe they are and contemptible, (hauing nothing to ſet them forth, but money and wealth) doe take vpon them to bee Lords, frowning vpon, rating, and threatning, and contemptuouſly vilifying thoſe that are farre their betters. And by theſe two circumſtances the wiſe man teacheth, that great wealth is a vſuall occaſion of cruelty and inſolency, which alſo

Iam.2.6. also the Apostle Saint *Iames* obserued, saying: *Doe not the rich oppresse you, and draw you before the iudgement seates?* And *Daniel* describing the condition of one of the Monarches or Monarchies, saith, that in his greatnesse he was *like to a Lion*
Dan.7.4. *with Eagles wings*, strong and fierce, and borne vp high; but when his state fell, his stomacke also came somewhat tamed: for when he was set on the ground vpon his feet, *that a mans heart* (which is more mild and moderate) *was giuen vnto him.* For it puffeth vp the heart, and maketh men proud and haughtie, thinking themselues the worthiest men, and condemning all others: and so it commeth to passe also by the inequality of power: for they see themselues so strengthened by their substance, that they be able to preuaile in what they will, and all the poore vnable to resist them. Security also is commonly ioyned with a great estate: for they that are vp aloft, doe not so much as dreame that they are subiect to falling, but their prosperity will bee perpetuall; as the Prophet bringeth in proud Babel boasting: *I shall bee a Lady for euer, so that thou*
Isa.47.7. *didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither remembredst thy latter end.* And in all this their follie and madnesse, they are very much forwarded by the inchantment of flatterers.

Vers.8. *He that soweth iniquity, shall reape vanity, and the rod of his anger shall faile.*

HE *that soweth iniquity,*] Hee that giueth himselfe ouer with greedinesse to commit sinne, *shall reape vanity*, condigne punishment and calamity, especially from God in due time. It is an allegoricall speech from husbandmen, which conclude of an harueste after their seeding, and looke what graine they sow, that they make reckoning to haue a crop of; and so wicked men doe necessarily prepare misery for themselues, as *Eliphaz* by obseruation and proofe informed *Iob*, saying, *As I haue seene they that plough iniquitie, and sow wick-*
Iob 4.8. *ednesse, reape the same.* The truth whereof also the Apostle *Paul* confirmeth as most certaine and infallible, admonishing the Galathians not to bee *deceiued* in the matter, as though God

God might *be mocked: For whatſoeuer a man ſoweth, that ſhall* Gal.6.8.
he alſo reap. Vpō mens ground ſomtimes thiſtles grow in ſtead of wheat, and cockle in ſtead of barley: but this ſinfull ſeedman, is ſure to haue his owne againe, and that in full proportion, there will bee neither alteration of graine, nor defect of growth; the truth and iuſtice of God will neuer permit that. This is perpetually true in all manner ſinnes whereunto they addict themſelues without repentance, eſpecially of tyrannie and oppreſſion, *the rod of his anger ſhall faile*, that is, as in his arrogancie and indignation he that ſcourged the poore, ſo hee ſhall be ſcourged therewith, and it ſhall bee ſpent vpon himſelfe, ſo that he ſhall haue no power to hurt others: for the more violent and cruell wicked men are, the neerer their power draweth to an end: for the harder and more often men ſtrike with the rod, the more they waſte it.

Verſ. 9. *He that hath a bountifull eye ſhall be bleſſed: for hee giueth of his bread to the poore.*

HE *that hath a bountifull eye*] Hee that is merciſull and liberall toward others (for a good man will haue his eye, and other ſenſes to further his heart to compaſſion: as *Moſes* went to ſee the burthens of his brethren: and thoſe bleſſed ones whom our Sauiour will praiſe at the laſt day, *viſited the hungry, the thirſtie, the ſicke, the priſoners*) (as contrariwiſe an euill eye is put for an enuious and euill perſon, becauſe with the ſame he corrupteth his heart) *ſhall be bleſſed*: for not only men will wiſh him well, but the Lord himſelfe will powre vpon him ſtore of earthly and heauenly bleſſings: ſo that the fruites of good grace ſhall encreaſe with him: *for he giueth of his bread to the poore*, and all other neceſſaries, according to their need, and his eſtate. And therefore the Lord according to his owne goodneſſe, will yeeld him the recompence of his goodneſſe.

Verſ. 10.

Verſ. 10. *Caſt out the ſcorner, and contention ſhall goe out: yea ſtrife and reproch ſhall ceaſe.*

CAſt out,] Thou whom it concerneth, as hauing a calling thereunto, as farre as thou mayeſt with equity, and conueniencie expell and baniſh out of thy companie, thy familie, and iuriſdiction, *the ſcorner*, hee that contemneth good men, good inſtructions, good matter. For beſide the reaſon particularly ſpecified, there is great reaſon why hee ſhould bee abandoned: becauſe hee is infectious, and able to corrupt all that conuerſe with him. He delighteth to trouble the company of godly men, and diſturbe all good conferences, if there bee any poſſibility of cure to be done of him; this diſgracefull expulſion is the moſt likely meanes to worke vpon his heart, and reclaime him: or if he receiue no benefit by it, it will bee an exemplarie warning and admonition to others, and contention betweene him and others well affected ſhall haue an end. For there is no way to auoid contention with ſcorners, but by excluding them out of our companie. For while they giue themſelues to contradicting and ſcorning, and take a certaine pride and pleaſure therein, they doe nothing but prouoke brawling and quarrels. Yet by that meanes of thruſting out ſcorners, ſtrife not onely with him, but part taking many ſinnes with others, and *reproch*, ſhame for, and in following ſuch diſcord, *ſhall ceaſe*, be compoſed, and proceed no further. Hee meaneth that diſſolute men are either the authors, or maintainers of *contention, and ſtrife*, which without them would either neuer haue been begun, or being kindled would ſoone be quenched: for they are deſtitute of the peace of God in their hearts, for they are enemies to peace, and to euery godly man that deſireth to liue peaceably, as *Dauid* complaineth, ſaying: *I am for peace, when I ſpeake thereof they are for warre.*

Rom.16.

Pſal.120.6.

Verſ.11.

Verſe 11. *He that loueth purenes of heart, for the grace of his lips, the King ſhall be his friend.*

HE *that loueth purenes of heart*] Which is ſincere, and vpright in the inward man, deſiring that grace which according to his wiſh his ſoule cannot ſo fully attaine vnto, deteſting that corruption which hee cannot perfectly be purged from: *for the grace of his lips*; becauſe he vttereth alſo gracious, and gratefull things, not ſuch as tickle the eares, but ſuch as effect a faithfull heart: for it is the note of ſincerity to ioyne heart and tongue together in good cauſes, euen by our Sauiours teſtimony who declareth, *that a good man, out of the good treaſure of his heart*, bringeth forth good things. To this agreeth that of the Pſalmiſt, *Mine heart will vtter forth a good matter, I will intreat in my workes of the King, my tongue is as the pen of a ſwift writer. The King ſhall be his friend*, he ſhall be well, and friendly vſed of great perſonages: for the King either will, or ſhould delight in ſuch perſons, as *Dauid* did in *Huſhai*. His purpoſe is, to declare that faithfulnes is the beſt way to preferment: as we ſee it verified in *Ioſeph*, in *Daniel*, in *Mordecai*, and ſundrie others recorded in the Bible. For honeſty, and plaine dealing is a thing deſirable: and therefore men for their owne ſakes, often make choice of, and imploy ſuch as they may truſt and rely vpon. And God hath the *Kings heart in his hand*, to deriue his loue vnto his ſeruants, and to bring thoſe into his fauour, which are beloued, and fauoured of him, and that many times for the vſe, and comfort of diuers of his children: for by the loue of *Pharao* to *Ioſeph*, all the family of *Iacob* was relieued; and by the kindnes of *Aſhueroſh* to *Eſter*, the whole Church and nation of the Iewes was preſerued. It ſeemeth that the acceptation of the ſound hearted man in this verſe, is oppoſed to the reiection of the ſcorner in the verſe before. Mat. 12. 35. Pſal. 45. 1. and 17. 3.

Verſe 12.

Verſe 12. *The eyes of the Lord preſerue knowledge: but hee ouerthroweth the matters of the tranſgreſſor.*

THe eyes of the Lord] His gratious mercie, and great prouidence (for hee ſpeaketh of God after the manner and capacitie of men) *preſerue*, keepe in ſafetie from all hurt and danger, *knowledge*, men indued with true knowledge and wiſdome, the qualities of the minde being put by a *Metonymie*, for the perſons indued therewith and their ſtate, and affaires alſo, as may be collected by the *Antitheſis*, but *he ouerthroweth the matters of the tranſgreſſor:* ſometimes hee reſiſteth at the beginning of their attempts: ſometimes they proceede on in their buſineſſe in great hope, and likelihood of happie ſucceſſe: but when they are about to ſet on the roofe, their foundation faileth, and downe commeth all their building, their words, their thoughts, their actions, their ſtate, all that they ſaid, purpoſed, did or had gotten, is quite ouerturned, and commeth to naught: For God doth ſet himſelfe againſt them in euery one of theſe. The oppoſition ſtandeth thus: *The eyes of the Lord preſerue* ſuch as haue *knowledge*, and therefore eſtabliſheth their matters, but they are directed againſt thoſe which are ſinfully ignorant, and therfore ouerthroweth their affaires.

Verſ. 13. *The ſlothfull man ſaith there is a Lion without: I ſhall be ſlaine in the ſtreetes.*

THe ſlothfull man] He that giueth himſelfe to idlenes, and loytering, *ſaith a Lion is without:* although hee vtter not the ſame words which are ſet downe in this place, yet hee ſo behaueth himſelfe, as if hee ſpake them, by fayning of lets, and fearing of dangers, as loſſe of life, or of fauour, or of libertie, or of money, hath alwaies one excuſe or other, either in his heart, or in his mouth: For this complaint of the Lion is but caſting of an imagined perill; imagined, I ſay, becauſe he thinketh

keth a Lambe to be a Lion, and is terrified with his owne conceit: For Lions haunt not in ſtreetes, but in woods and wildernesses: and if a Lion were in the ſtreete of a citie, or towne, there would bee helpe enough to ſaue the man, and kill the beaſt, ſo that there need to be no ſuch dread to be ſlaine therein. It is the purpoſe of the holy Ghoſt to declare the diſpoſition of men that are vnwilling to doe good, they will deuiſe ſhifts, and faine excuſes, needleſſe, and ſenſeleſſe, and very abſurd, rather then they will be induced to performe that which they affect not. King *Zedekiah* was perſwaded to yeeld himſelfe to the King of Babel, and ſo he, his people, and the citie ſhould be ſpared from the ſword: but hee durſt not forſooth, *becauſe he was afraid of the Iewes that were fallen vnto the king of Babel, leſt they ſhould be deliuered to them, and they would mocke him.* Ierem. 18. 19. Certaine ſearchers were ſent with *Ioſhua* and *Caleb* into the land of Canaan, to view the countrie, to the intent they might bring good newes to the people, & animate them to goe and take poſſeſſion thereof: but they wanted courage, and had no minde to incounter with the Canaanites, & therefore could picke quarrels againſt the place, and finde out reaſons in reſpect of the perſons, to afray themſelues, and all their brethren from that expedition. *The cities are walled* (ſay they) *and exceeding great, the people be ſtrong that dwell in the land: it is a land that eateth vp the inhabitants of it: and the men that are in it are of great ſtature: for we ſaw giants the ſonnes of Anak, which came of the giants, ſo that we ſeemed in our ſight like graſhoppers, and ſo wee were in their ſight.* Numb. 13. 33. Was there euer any thing more gratious, comfortable, and lightſome, then the kingdome of Chriſt? and hath euer any gouernment beene more milde and righteous, then that of *Dauid*, his ſubſtitute and figure? and yet the contemptuous rebels which refuſed to ſubmit themſelues thereunto, could picke quarrels againſt the ſame, as if they had been cruell and tyrannous, accounting them rather priſons and Iayles, then tollerable gouernments. *Let vs* (ſay they) *breake their bands, and caſt their cordes from vs.* Pſal. 2.

Verſe 14. *The mouth of a ſtrange woman is a deepe ditch, he that is abhorred of the Lord ſhall fall therein.*

THE mouth] The faire ſpeeches, and flattering words vttered by the mouth of *a ſtrange woman*, of an harlot, or whore, *is a deepe ditch*, full of great danger. It is very fitly compared to a pit, becauſe he that falleth thereinto cannot riſe vp againe, but is plunged into eternall and moſt fearefull deſtruction, and bottomleſſe miſerie. See chap. 7.26.27.

And hee that is abhorred of the Lord] Such a one againſt whom God is prouoked by former wickednes: being deliuered vp by him into a reprobate ſenſe, through a peculiar kinde of reuenge, ſhall be ſeduced by her, as this our *Salomon* elſwhere alſo teſtifieth; *I find more bitter then death the woman whoſe heart is ſnares and nets, and her hands as bands: who ſo pleaſeth God ſhall eſcape from her: but the ſinner ſhall be taken by her.*

Eccleſ. 7.26.

Verſe 15. *Fooliſhnes is bound to the heart of a childe: but the rod of correction ſhall driue it out.*

FOoliſhnes] Wantonnes, frowardnes, and ſimplicitie ſpreadeth it ſelfe thorow the whole fleſh of youth, but eſpecially hath aboad in their ſoules, where it is deeply rooted: For their reaſon is weake, their will waiward, and their whole heart addicted and inclined to euill. And this corruption is bound vp in ſuch ſort in a childes heart, as that it is faſt tyed thereunto, as a packe or a fardell is to an horſes back. So then all children, as well as elder folke, are addicted and inclined to euill, ſinne, and folly. And *Dauid* yeeldeth a reaſon hereof: (for that which hee teſtifieth of himſelfe pertaineth to all others) when hee ſaith, *that he was borne in iniquitie, and that in ſinne his mother had conceiued him. But the rod of correction will driue it out:* Correction giuen with the rod will be a very good meanes to remoue it. For the medicines againſt ſinne, which God vſeth to euery age, bee effectuall to his owne of that

Pſal. 51.5.

that age: as to the elder ſort, the Word, the Sacraments, and cenſures of the Church: to the younger ſort, eſpecially to ſuch as are yet but tender, inſtructions, with the rod of parents and gouernours.

Verſ. 16. *He that oppreſſeth the poore to increaſe his riches, and he that giueth to the rich, ſhall ſurely come to pouertie.*

HE *that oppreſſeth the poore*] Either by fraud, or force, or any indirect meanes, *to increaſe his riches*, to make himſelfe more rich and mightie thereby: for they that take away from the needie, vſually beſtow where no neede is, and the greateſt oppreſſors are commonly great bribers of thoſe that are aboue them, and often make feaſts to their ſuperiours, to get them to be their friends, and to ſerue their turnes: that their faults may be winked at, and diſpenſed with: and to ſaue their credit, which is impeached by their violent and vnmercifull dealing, *ſhall ſurely come to want*. For crueltie, and vniuſt dealing, is the way to ouerthrow a mans eſtate, as *Zophar* witneſſeth: *That which hee laboured for ſhall he reſtore, and ſhall not ſwallow it downe: according to his ſubſtance ſhall his reſtitution be, and he ſhall not reioyce therein. Becauſe he hath oppreſſed the poore, becauſe hee hath violently taken away an houſe which hee builded not.* Iob. 20. 18. 19. The Lord by law of requitall doth oftentimes expoſe them to oppreſſion, or elſe otherwiſe powreth a curſe vpon them: this ſometimes they haſten by their owne greedy deſires, in ſtriuing to compaſſe great matters, and to that end giue to the rich, and namely to the Vſurers, that they may furniſh them with money, when there will not be ſufficient for the purpoſe: who hauing gotten them into their clutches, do pray vpon them, vntill they haue drawne them drie, neuer ceaſing to ſucke, ſo long as there is any moiſture in their eſtate.

Verſ. 17. *Bow downe thine eares, and heare the words of the wiſe, and applie thine heart to my vnderſtanding.*

FRom the beginning of the tenth chapter, to this place, diuers briefe ſentences haue been ſet downe, rather by way

The moneth of a ſtuffe woman is a

of doctrine, then exhortation. Now that ſtile being altered *Salomon* returneth to take vnto him the perſon of a father, and for the moſt part doth ſpeake after that manner which he vſed in the nine firſt chapters, and this courſe he holdeth in the remnant of this chapter, and the two next following. Againe, exhortation is here propounded, which is ſet foorth by the ſubiect of it: the duties whereunto hee doth perſwade vs in this verſe, and is inforced by reaſons for confirmation of it, in the foure next following. The dutie is firſt ſet downe more generally, to embrace the words of wiſe men: and more particularly to be attentiue to his knowledge: *Bow downe thine eares, and hearken vnto the words of the wiſe*, bend the ſenſe of hearing, which is the entrie of vnderſtanding, vnto the ſpeeches, and writings of the godly learned. For regard is to be had to the documents and inſtructions of men indued with pietie and vnderſtanding, and that doth *Dauid* require of all in that ample and ſerious exhortation: *Heare this all yee people, giue eare all ye inhabitants of the world.* Our neede requireth it, who euer wee are, though as *Dauid*, or *Peter:* and Gods bleſſing is beſtowed vpon thoſe that are attentiue to ſuch, Chap.13.14. and his iudgements purſue ſuch as reiect them: as we may ſee in *Rehoboam*, in *Amaziah*, and in *Elies* ſonnes, *and apply thine heart to my knowledge.* See chap.2.2.

Pſal.49.1.

1.King.12.

Verſe 18. *For it is a pleaſant thing, if thou keepe them within thee, they ſhall withall be fitted in thy lips.*

THe reaſon whereby he doth confirme his doctrine, is firſt from the delectation, and delightfulnes of it, in the beginning of this verſe: the ſecond from the commoditie and vſefulnes of it, in the latter part of this verſe, and in all the next: thirdly, from the excellencie and dignitie of it, in the twentieth verſe: fourthly, from the certaintie and truth, in the one and twentieth.

For it is a pleaſant thing, the hearing, and vnderſtanding of them, and all other Scriptures, *is ſweete, and comfortable*, as ioyfull to the heart, as any aſpect or beautifull ſight can poſ-

ſibly

ſibly be to the eye, or the moſt delicious foode can bee to the taſte: For they are found and felt to bee ſweeter *then the hony, or the hony combe.* For by theſe a man is eſtated in Pſal 19.10. Chriſt, in Gods fauour, in heauen, and in all the promiſes: *if thou keepe them within thee,* in thy heart, in thy minde, and in thy memorie: the Hebrew word is in *thy belly,* which ſometimes in the Scriptures is taken for the inward parts, or faculties of the ſoule, *they ſhall be withall fitted on thy lips.* From the pleaſure of them, he commeth to the vſe, and profit of them: which in the firſt place is externall, they ſhall furniſh a man with wholeſome and ſeaſonable ſpeeches. It is ſaid they *ſhall be fitted on thy lips,* the inſtrument, or cauſe, being put for the effect thereof: For the word of God in the heart and minde, doth yeeld matter to the tongue and lips, of fruitfull conference: and he that applieth his eare to heare attentiuely, ſhall Iſai.50.4.5. thereby inable his mouth to ſpeak fruitfully, and for the good of many. And agreeable hereunto is that in the Pſalme, *The mouth of the righteous ſpeaketh wiſedome, and his tongue talketh of iudgement: For the law of God is in his heart, therefore none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide.* Pſal.37.30.31.

Verſ. 19. *That thy truſt may bee in the Lord, I haue made knowne vnto this day euen vnto thee.*

HE ſheweth another vſe and fruit of his doctrine, and all Gods words, which is internall, and that which concerneth the inward man, which is hope, confidence, and dependance vpon God: as if he ſhould haue ſaid: To the intent thou maieſt neither deſpaire, nor yet ſecurely leane vnto thine owne wiſedome, I haue both by my words and writings giuen thee ſuch inſtruction, as ſhew both *Iehouah* to be the true, eternall, and all-ſufficient God, as alſo declare the duties of obedience, wherein men are to walke before him. For the whole ſcope of the Scripture is, to bring men to beleeue in, and confidently to reſt on God, as Saint *Paul* teacheth, affirming, that *whatſoeuer things haue been written in fore time,* Rom.15.4. *were written for our learning, that we therough patience, and*

comfort in the Scriptures might haue hope. For in this consisteth all true blessednesse: as from vaine confidence, and worldly trust all misery proceedeth.

Vers. 20. *Haue I not written vnto thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge?*

THis verse containeth the third reason, commending the excellencie of *Salomons* lessons, and all the rest of Gods doctrines, which he expresseth, partly by a *simile*, or comparison, and partly by the matter and subiect which they handle and entreat of: the comparison is taken from the dignities and degrees of great men; and therefore he saith, that they are *excellent*, or princely, nor base or common, but rare and royall sentences: before in this booke Christ said, I will vtter the words of rulers: there is vsed a word in the Hebrew, that noteth out those gouernours which guide and leade the people: and here another which signifieth those nobles which are in the third place from the King. The subiects hereof is *counsels*, and *knowledge*, which reueale and make manifest the reuelation, and manifestation of Gods counsels and purposes which aduise a man, and giue him perfect direction in all his waies, which so cleerely informe a man in whatsoeuer is fit for him to vnderstand, as that there is nothing meet for his soule, or state, or credit, or any thing appertaining vnto him for his good, but he may know, and haue sound intelligence thereof.

Negudim.

Shalishim.

Vers. 21. *That I may make thee to know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mayest answere the words of truth to them that send vnto thee.*

HEre we haue the last reason whereby this doctrine is praised, the verity of that which he in this place, and the spirit of God euery where doth teach: which first hee expressly professeth and teacheth, and after enlargeth by the end and effect of the same; *That I might make thee to know the certainty of the words of truth*: as if he should haue said, I do not broach

or

or giue out fantaſies or fables, which vaniſh or euer they come to paſſe, or fictions of things which neuer were: but I publiſh truthes, whereof thou maieſt haue a perfect euidence, and which ſhall be performed without faile in their ſeaſon: and are not onely to be credited as humane words, or writings, but to be beleeued with faith as the ſayings of God. The end of this followeth, *that thou mighteſt anſwere the words of truth to them that ſend vnto thee*; which tendeth to this purpoſe: that, and the Lord which ſpeaketh by me, would not onely haue thee to apprehend and bee perſwaded of the truth thy ſelfe, but to confirme it alſo to others, and bee able to render a reaſon of thy iudgement and doings to thoſe that ſhal cal thee to an account, and to giue ſound aduice to thoſe that ſhall require thy counſell. Deut.6.6. 1.Pet.3.15.

Verſ.22. *Rob not the poore, becauſe he is poore, nor the afflicted in the gate.*

23. *For the Lord will plead the cauſe, and will ſpoile thoſe that ſpoiled them.*

THeſe two verſes containe a caueat againſt oppreſſion; wherein wee may note the parties ſpecially to bee freed from moleſtation, and the manner of moleſting in the former verſe; and the reaſon of it in the latter. The parties not to bee wronged are the *poore*, *Rob not the poore*, take nothing from him vniuſtly, not vpon that title which he hath, nor any part of his ſubſtance, *becauſe he is poore*, embolden not thy ſelfe by the ſight of his debility, and thine owne power to fly at him, deuoure, or plume him, but therefore bee the more warie, and if nothing elſe detaine thee from that attempt, yet let this, *becauſe he is poore*, and hath more need to bee relieued then further moleſted. The manner of wrong doing forbidden is, *oppreſſe not the afflicted in the gate*. It is agrieuous fault to adde affliction to the afflicted, but to doe it in the gate, to abuſe ones might in the place and ſeate of iuſtice, which is meant by the gate, there to ouerthrow the right of him that is wrongfully purſued, or grieuouſly oppreſſed, is an intollerable crime, Pſal.69.26.

and hainous offence: for God hath appointed it as a refuge for them that are wronged, and for reliefe of them which ſuſtaine iniuries. The reaſon why this ſinne is to be auoided, and men ſhould ſo carefully abſtaine from it, is, becauſe the Lord will take the matter into his hand, though all the counſell bee againſt them now, and no man take vpon him the defence of their cauſe, or to open his mouth in their behalfe, yet God in time, without a fee will proue that the law and right was on their ſide, and though the bench bee made againſt them, and ſentence paſſed on their aduerſaries ſide, yet the ſuite will not ſo bee ended, but haue a new day of hearing hereafter, when God ſhall be Iudge, who will make a decree that all the proceedings againſt him, ſhall be reuerſed, or left ſo recompenſed as ſhall be to their honour, and their enemies ſhame: *For hee will ſpoile their ſoule that ſpoileth them*, execute vengeance, and iudgements vpon the ſoules and bodies of their oppreſſors, to their vtter ouerthrow in earth, or hell, amongſt men, or before the throne of Chriſt in the world to come. This was of great moment with *Iob* to deterre him from violence, and iniuſtice towards his feebleſt inferiours, whom hee could haue had meanes moſt eaſily to cruſh: *If I*, ſaith he, *haue lift vp my hand againſt the fatherleſſe, when I ſaw my helpe in the gate; then let mine arme fall from my ſhoulder blade, and mine arme be broken from the bone. For deſtruction from God was a terrour vnto me, and I could not be deliuered from his highneſſe.*

Iob 31.22.

Verſ. 24. *Make no friendſhip with an angry man, and with a furious man thou ſhalt not goe.*

25. *Leſt thou learne his waies, and get a ſnare to thy ſoule.*

MAke *no friendſhip*] Chuſe not him to bee thy familiar friend, who is of a wrathfull diſpoſition, *neither goe with him*, be not ſociable with, nor oft in the companie of *the furious man*, him that is wholly giuen to heate and furie, and cannot ſubdue his angrie and outragious affections: Some by nature ſomewhat haſtie are not vtterly to bee reiected, or excluded from our companie, if through Gods grace they bridle them-

themſelues in any good meaſure: but ſuch as neither haue power nor will to ſtay their paſſions, either by Gods grace, or the vſe of reaſon, are fit to liue alone, as Dragons, or wild beaſts. The reaſons of this precept are from the euill effect that will proceed from ſuch a companion. One is, leſt *thou learne his waies*, leſt by his example and company thou be infected with his vices. For ſociety with any kind of wicked perſon is dangerous to cauſe infection, and in perticular in this caſe, there can be no ſafety in breach or kindneſſe with him: If we accord, and there be agreement betweene vs, we ſhall heare vntrue reports from him, and ſo be partakers with him: if breaches, wee ſhall be driuen alſo to brawle and contend, and ſo at the laſt get an habit of frowardneſſe. Another is, *leſt thou get a ſnare to thy ſoule*, leſt thou be driuen into ſome quarrels, to doe miſchiefe, to the endangering of thy ſoule, or life, or be aſſaulted with his violence, and meet with a deadly blow at his hands: for the furious perſon ſpareth not to ſhead blood, neither are his moſt familiar and kindeſt friends alwaies free from his rage or aſſaults.

Verſ. 25. *Be not thou one of them that ſtrike hands, nor of them that are ſureties for debts.*

26. *If thou haſt nothing to pay, why ſhould he take away thy bed from vnder thee?*

BE *not of the number of them that ſtrike hands.* See chap. 5. 1.2.3.

If thou haſt nothing to pay] If thou haſt vndertaken for more then he for whom thou gaueſt thy word, is able to ſatisfie, or thou thy ſelfe canſt conueniently diſcharge, *Why ſhould he take away thy bed from vnder thee?* why doſt thou through thine owne follie commit, that thou ſhouldeſt bee depriued of the bed whereon thou lieſt? and haue a thing ſo neceſſarie as that is to bee taken away from thee, and ſo beſides the ſhame and diſgrace thou ſhalt haue nothing to lie on. See chap. 20. 16.

Verſ. 27.

Verſe 27. *Remoue not the ancient land-markes which thy fathers haue ſet.*

REmoue not] By force, or fraud, openly, or ſecretly, in the day, or in the night, *the ancient land-markes*, to inlarge thine owne ground, and detract from others, *which thy fathers haue ſet*, which thine anceſtors haue made for bounds and limits. In Iudea the changing of the markes of lands did breed great confuſion, in the yeere of Iubile, wherein their grounds were to be reſtored to the firſt poſſeſſor, or at leaſt to their poſteritie. Amongſt vs incroaching on other mens poſſeſſions, and the deceitfull diſplacing of the ſignes of our inheritances, cauſeth ſuites of law, fraies, and ſlaughter. If mens grounds ſhould not bee ſeuered by creekes, or ditches, or hedges, or meare-ſtones, or ſome other markes, much wrong would bee done, and none ſhould know his owne: and therefore ſaith
Deut.19.14. *Moſes* in Deuteronomie, *Remoue not the ancient bounds which the elders haue ſet downe.* And by the infringing of this precept men incurre that ſolemne curſe, which was publikly denounced vpon mount Eball, with the *Amen* of all the multi-
Deut.27.17. tude, *Curſed be he that remoueth his neighbours marke, and all the people ſhall ſay Amen.*

Verſ. 28. *Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſſe? he ſhall ſtand before Kings, and not before meane men.*

SEeſt thou a man diligent, or ſwift (for ſo the word ſignifieth) *in his buſineſſe*, doeſt thou obſerue one who diſpatcheth any worke of the body or minde with nimblenes, or that doth as it were flie about his maſters errands? *he ſhall ſtand before Kings*, he ſhall be receiued into the ſeruice of Nobles, and Princes, who are wont greatly to delight in thoſe that are quicke ſpirited, and painfull, *and not before meane men*, remaineth not in the number of them, but is more highly preferred. Whereby he ſignifieth, that faithfulnes in a calling, is the beſt way to true aduancement. If they haue not entertainment with

with great men, becauſe their families bee not alwaies ſafeſt for their ſoules and manners, yet they ſhall be ſure of fauour, and countenance, from the great God, which of all others yeeldeth the greateſt honour. See chap. 12.24.

CHAPTER. XXIII.

Verſ. 1. *When thou ſitteſt With a ruler, conſider diligently what is before thee.*

2 *For thou putteſt a knife to thy throte, if thou be a man giuen to thine appetite.*

3 *Be not deſirous of his daintie meate, for it is a deceitfull meate.*

THE holy Ghoſt declared in the laſt verſe of the former chapter, that diligence aduanceth to the preſence, and ſpeech of great perſonages: and now in the beginning of this chapter, he ſheweth how they ſhould behaue themſelues when they come before them: ſpecially when they ſit to eate with them. Theſe verſes containe two exhortations, inforced with their ſeuerall reaſons. The firſt is to bee wiſe, and conſiderate at the preſent whiles we are at the table with them: that then we ſhew not our ſelues rauenous, and vnciuill, in the two firſt verſes. The other, that we doe not greedily affect dainties, to preſſe our ſelues to the feaſts and tables of our betters, eſpecially noble perſonages, and courtiers, in the third verſe. *Conſider diligently what is before thee*, ponder, and obſerue, with wiſedome, and diſcretion, the nature and number of thoſe diſhes that are placed on the table, that thou begin not where thou ſhouldeſt not, and ſo bewray want of good manners, or ouercharge thy ſtomacke by feeding on euery one, and ſo diſgrace thy ſelfe with intemperance: For it is an ordinarie thing at the tables of Princes and great Lords, to haue diuerſitie of meates, with diuers ſorts of wines and plentie, to ſhew their magni-

magnificence, whereof a man cannot fall to euery one without luxurie, and exceſſe, which is odious at all times, and in all places, but much more thee, and in ſuch a preſence. And therfore men ought to be as circumſpect at their meate, as in any other of their affaires: becauſe mens eyes looke vpon them, which ought to be regarded, eſpecially if they be men of qualitie and place; and Gods eyes behold them, which of al others ought moſt to bee reſpected. S. *Iude* marketh them with the brand of wicked perſons which *feede themſelues without all feare. Otherwiſe thou putteſt a knife to thy throte:* If thou bee immoderate in thy diet, and haſt not power to bridle thine appetite, and reſtraine thy ſelfe from exceſſiue eating and drinking, thou doeſt after a ſort indanger thy life, as if thou diddeſt put a knife to thy throte, and ſo be made the author of thine owne death: For ſurfeiting and drunkennes doth deſtroy health, and ſo thereby men offer violence to their bodies: and the puniſhment of them is euerlaſting death, and ſo thereby they deſtroy their owne ſoules. *Be not deſirous of his daintie diſhes*, luſt not after, nor couet with an vnbridled affection his delicates: the Hebrew word importeth ſuch things as ſauour well to the taſte, and are ſweete and delicious. The meaning is, that good fare, fine apparell, and other delights, which are to be found in the courts of Princes, and families of great men, ſhould not allure vs without iuſt cauſe, and due calling, to intrude our ſelues as it were into thoſe places, to become courtiers, companions with, or attendants vpon thoſe of high calling: *for it is a deceitfull meate*, like a baite, vnder which lurketh an hooke, and ſuch foode it is as will eaſily ouertake a man, if he be not very watchfull and warie: it doth not yeeld ſuch contentment as men expected: many vexations are mingled with it: there is no ſtabilitie therein, to day in fauour, to morrow in diſgrace; now aloft, with countenance and hopes, anone downe to the ground with contumelies and deſpaire: many ſeeking by this meanes to ſet vp themſelues, and theirs for euer, haue ruinated their former eſtate, which was competent, and vtterly ouerthrowne their poſterities.

Iude 12.

Matgnammoth.

Verſ. 4.

Verſe 4. *Labour not to be rich, ceaſe from thine owne wiſedome.*

Verſe 5. *Wilt thou cauſe thine eyes to flie vpon that which is nothing? For riches maketh her ſelfe wings, and flieth as an eagle toward heauen.*

AS in the former ſentences he forbad the immoderate appetite after daintie foode: ſo in theſe he prohibiteth too great a deſire of wealth, and riches. He proceedeth in the ſame methode which he had begun in the former chapter, by giuing an admonition, and confirming it with a reaſon, *Labour not to be rich*, drudge and moyle not by toylefull trauell to get, and hoard vp ſubſtance, and ſtore thine houſe, thy cheſts, thy barnes, thy fields, thy grounds, thy warehouſe, or thy ſhoppe with plentie and abundance: *ceaſe from thine owne wiſedome*, becauſe thou haſt, and all carnall men do account it a poynt of prudence and wiſdome, to be worldly, and hauing, to prouide, and heape vp much, therefore alter thy minde and reforme thy iudgement, know that to bee folly, which thou eſteemeſt for great wiſedome: For ſeeing it was not the wiſedome of God, but the wiſedome of the world, which ſeemeth plauſible to the fleſh, but abſurd to the ſpirit, thou ſhalt prouide beſt for thy ſelfe to caſt it off, and haue no more to doe with it. For notwithſtanding it is diſcretion to bee induſtrious, and diligent in worke, to ſerue the Lord, in hope of his bleſſing: yet it is but a fooliſh part to oppreſſe the body or minde with too heauie burthens of karking, caring, and anxietie, to make a god of ones owne labour or policie, with truſt or confidence in that which is done, or gotten. So, that worldlineſſe is no part of ſound wiſedome, but of condemnable folly, and that by Gods owne teſtimonie, calling him foole, which wanted not wit to heape vp great wealth. For it is painful to the body, and draweth it vnto needleſſe and fruitleſſe labours and trauels: it is burthenous to the minde, and oppreſſeth it with ſorrow and vexations: and it is perilous for the heart and conſci-

Luke 12.20.

Eccleſ.2.26.

Eccleſ.5.17.

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ence, and maketh men vnfit for their latter end, vnmindfull of
Luke 21.34. death, and vnprepared for the iudgement to come.

Wilt thou cauſe thine eyes to flie vpon that which is nothing? Wilt thou too earneſtly and egerly like a fooliſh Faulkner, haulke with the flight of thine eyes, after that which when thou haſt caught it is nothing worth? Two arguments hee vſeth to condemne the ſin of couetouſnes: one from the vanitie of goods ſo gotten: the other from the inſtabilitie, and vncertaintie of them. He calleth them nothing, but that there is a ſubſtance in the creatures, and good vſe alſo of them to ſuch as loue them not too much, nor abuſe them, but none in poſſeſſion of them to the couetous perſon: the hauing them is nothing, and to no purpoſe to him. It is as good, and better to be without them, then not to be nothing the better for them. *They flie as an eagle toward heauen:* the inſtabilitie, and vncertaintie of riches, hee declareth by an ellegant ſimilitude, ſhewing them to be as fugitiue, and once loſt as irrecouerable, as wilde fowle that is flien away, as thoſe ſowles which be ſwifteſt of wing, and ſoare higheſt, euen like vnto an Eagle, which cannot eaſily be taken, or ouertaken. Now then as a man cannot aſſure himſelfe to fare the better, becauſe fowle doe light on his paſture, or ſit in his meddowes, becauſe they bee in his
Iob. 21.16. ground, but not in his hand, as *Iob* ſaith: For when hee commeth towards them for contentment, comfort, or vſe, they take their flight, and mount vp into the aire, and flie away, and ſo defeate him of all his hopes: Earthly things may be plentifully in an earthly minded mans houſe, but no more his, for inioyment, then the birds that ſit vpon the top of his houſe, or vpon an high tree, or flie in the open fields. *Ieremy* vſeth a ſimilie ſomewhat like vnto this, and altogether for the ſame purpoſe: *As the Partrich ſitteth on egges, and hatcheth them not:* or otherwiſe tranſlated, *As the Partrich gathereth young*
Iere. 17.11. *which ſhe hath not brought foorth: ſo he that gathereth riches, and not by right, ſhall leaue them in the middeſt of his daies, and at his end ſhall be a foole.*

Verſ. 6.

Verſe 6. *Eate thou not the bread of him that hath an euill eye, nor deſire his daintie meates.*

Verſ. 7. *For as he thinketh ſo is he: eate and drinke ſaith he to thee, but his heart is not with thee.*

Verſ. 8. *The morſell which thou haſt eaten thou ſhalt vomit vp, and loſe thy ſweete words.*

AS a little before hee aduiſed vs not to be too deſirous of the delicates of great men: ſo here he counſelleth vs to beware, that we be not too much beholding for foode, or any other benefits, to miſers and churles. *Eate not*, nor partake of, without conſideration, or iuſt warrant, *the bread*, drinke, or any kinde of foode, or other beneuolence, *of him that hath an euill eye*, of a too much reſtrained or niggardly perſon, ſuch a one is contrary to him that is liberall, and hath a good eye, chap. 22. 19. *neither be deſirous of his daintie meates* (becauſe a ſweete tooth, and hungrie appetite, leade men many times to vnfit places) *For as he thinketh in his heart: ſo is he*, he is not as he pretendeth with his tongue, and as he maketh ſemblance of with his countenance, franke, and free, and glad to giue entertainment: but miſerable, and churliſh, becauſe he thinketh all loſt, that any man hath from him, nay that goeth out of his diſh, or out of his cup, or out of his purſe, although it be for his owne people, or his owne lips: he begrudgeth himſelfe ſufficient of foode and neceſſaries, and how can hee then willingly ſpare any thing to ſtrangers? he cannot affoord his own belly a good morſell of meate, and would it not grieue him that thou ſhouldeſt eate vp his victuals: and therefore though he ſay vnto thee, *eate, drinke*, goe to I pray you, ſpare not, you are welcome, &c. *yet his heart is not with thee*, he thinketh not as hee ſpeaketh, nor ſpeaketh in loue ſo much as in complement, and with diſſimulation. *The morſell which thou haſt eaten thou ſhalt vomit vp*, thou ſhalt finde ſuch bitter ſauce to thy ſweete meate by ſome ſnare wherewith hee will intrap thee, to make thee pay dearely for all that thou haſt eaten at his board, or by ſome diſtaſtfull ſpeeches to make vp the meale with,

with, or by his discourrie, and thy apprehension of his niggardly disposition, as that thy mind shall bee as much afflicted with griefe, as if thy stomacke were disquieted with a surfeit, or the receit of a vomit, *and lose thy sweet words*, either such as thou hast receiued from him, as welcome, *and much good doe you*, and others of like nature, or such as thou shalt render to him in way of thankfulnesse, and acknowledgement of his kindnesse.

Vers. 9. *Speake not in the eares of a foole: for hee will despise the wisedome of thy words.*

SPeake not] Vtter not wholesome counsell to an obstinate foole, or scorner: for he that wil do good, and receiue comfort by his words, must consider not onely what he saith, but with whom hee talketh: good seed is not to bee sowne vpon rockes, and craggie places: good licour is not to be put in vncleane or broken vessels: holy things are not to bee giuen to dogges: nor pearles to be cast before swine. *For he will despise the wisedome of thy words*, he will be so farre from profiting by that which thou shalt teach him, as that he will peruert them, and either picke quarrels, and raile vpon thee, or otherwise take aduantage against thee, or at least hate and despise thee, and the wisedome of thy words. See chap. 9. 7. 8. 9.

But herein it concerneth vs to bee cautious and discreet, as that wee condemne not euery one that is in a fit of passion, to be a wicked foole, nor euery vnregenerate man to be a wilfull foole in this kinde and nature, but triall must bee had, (so farre as is fit for our place) before we passe such a censure vpon any. And in this case patience and long suffering is requireable, that
2. Tim. 2. 24. though we find no successe at one time, yet wee take occasion to try what will bee done at another: and though wee bee the men that can doe no good with him, yet let vs hope that another may preuaile more: but yet after all this, if he persist in his railing and iesting, and contemptuous behauiour, make an end with him, cease to admonish him any further: but though hee bee incorrigible, and will not be instructed,

ted, yet he is rebukeable, and muſt be diſgraced, both for terrour to himſelfe, and example to others.

Verſ. 10. *Remoue not the ancient land-markes, and enter not into the field of the fatherleſſe.*

Remoue not the ancient land-markes. See for this, chap. 22. 28. *and enter not*, either by craft or violence, by fraud, or force, in any ſort, *into the fields*, houſes, or poſſeſſions, either to make claime vnto them: if thy conſcience tell thee they be not thine owne, or to take any commodity thence which is not due vnto thee, *of the fatherleſſe*, of orphants, who by reaſon of their young age, can make no reſiſtance: as wanting experience in themſelues, or helpe and aide from others. And the ſame is to be vnderſtood of any that are weake and friendleſſe: and according to this the Lord ſaith in Exodus, *Thou ſhalt not moleſt any widow, or orphant.* Exod. 22. 22.

Verſ. 11. *For their redeemer is mighty, and hee will pleade their cauſe with thee.*

HE alleageth a cauſe why iniurie ſhould not bee offered to the fatherleſſe, or widow, &c. For that the Lord who is the helper of the helpleſſe, is full of might and power; though they be poore and weake, he is their *redeemer*, or reuenger, hee is (as it were) their neereſt kinſman, who is to purſue not only the blood that is ſhead, but all other wrongs that are done. Albeit they finde no patrones in the world, yet hee will defend their right, and puniſh the wrong doers: for hee doth moſt helpe them that be helpleſſe in the world: and the ſame the Scriptures publiſh as matter of great honour and glory due vnto him, *Sing ye vnto God* (ſaith one text) *ſing praiſes to his name, extoll him that rideth vpon the heauens, by his name Iah, and reioyce before him. A father of the fatherleſſe, and a iudge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. Praiſe ye the Lord; praiſe the Lord O my ſoule* (ſaith another) *The Lord preſer-* Pſal. 68. 4. 5.

Pſal.146.1.9. *neth the ſtrangers, he relieueth the fatherleſſe and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth vpſide downe.*

And therefore it is ſafer to encounter with men of great might, then to trample vpon them, who in themſelues haue the leaſt power, foraſmuch as God is in this caſe more intereſted in the cauſe, as being in a ſpecial manner the gardian of his powerleſſe orphans, or pupils, and the great maſter of the wards. *If thou ſeeſt* (ſaith Eccleſiaſtes) *the oppreſſion of the poore, and violent peruerting of iudgement and iuſtice in a prouince, marnell not at the matter*, in way of diſcouragement: *for he that is higher then the higheſt, regardeth, and there bee higher then they.*

Eccleſ.5.8.

Verſ. 12. *Apply thine heart to inſtruction, and thine eares to the words of knowledge.*

APply thine heart to inſtruction,] Bend all the powers and faculties of thy mind to receiue it, *and thine eares*, apply all thy ſenſes and parts of thy body alſo, *to the words of knowledge*, as are vttered out of knowledge, wiſedome, and iudgement, and able to miniſter knowledge and vnderſtanding: hee vſeth a part of the inward man, and a part of the outward man for the whole man, both inward, and outward: for if thou wouldeſt haue an attentiue eare at the word of God, thou muſt bring a good heart to it: and if thou wouldeſt ſtore thy heart with the wiſedome and grace of the word, thou muſt bring an attentiue eare; otherwiſe thou ſhalt not vnderſtand, or not affect, or not retaine, or not obey that which is taught thee.

Verſ. 13. *Withhold not correction from thy child: for if thou beateſt him he ſhall not die.*

14. *Thou ſhalt beate him with the rod, and deliuer his ſoule from hell.*

WIthhold not correction,] Be not remiſſe to inflict moderate and due puniſhment, when need requireth, *from*

from thy child, which deſerueth the ſame, as few do not, at one time or other: *for if thou beateſt him with the rod*, when thou ſhalt in meaſure, and good diſcretion chaſten with the twig, or wand, thou ſhalt cauſe him to ſmart, and not cauſe him to die, or receiue hurt thereby. The old ſaying remaineth true, that the rod will breake no bones: thou ſhalt be ſo farre from killing of him, as that it will be good phyſicke for him, and a medicine to preſerue him aliue.

Beate him with the rod, and thou deliuer his ſoule from hell,] From death, danger, and miſery, both of ſoule and body. Thoſe gouernours then that moſt faithfully exerciſe Gods diſcipline towards their people, are their beſt, and moſt faithfull friends, and of all others doe them moſt good, and that in time the reformed ſeruant will acknowledge with thankfulneſſe vnto his maſter, and the child to his parents, which is promiſed (as the fruit and good effect of holy ſeuerity, for the reclaiming of hurtfull perſons) by the Prophet: *One ſhall ſay* vnto ſuch a one, and ſo dealt with, *What are theſe wounds in thine hands? Then he ſhall anſwere, Thoſe with which I was wounded in the houſe of my friends.* Zach. 13. 6.

Verſe 15. *My ſonne, if thine heart be wiſe, my heart ſhall reioyce, euen mine.*

16. *Yea my reines ſhall reioyce when thy lips ſpeake right things.*

My ſonne if thine heart be wiſe,] If thine affections doe deſire wiſedome, and thy mind be enriched with it *mine heart ſhall reioyce, euen mine*, euen I ſhall wonderfull delight therein for thy ſake, what comfort then ſhalt thou thy ſelfe finde by it.

Yea my reines ſhall reioyce,] Mine inward parts ſhall be moued to exceeding great cheerfulneſſe: and I ſhall be glad from the bottome of my heart. For Scripture attributeth the ſeat of the will and affections to the reines: as when it is ſaid, *God is the ſearcher of the heart and reines: When thy lips ſpeake right things*, when thou vttereſt ſuch ſpeeches as are true, wiſe, Ier. 17. 10.

3.Ioh.3. 1.Thes.3.16. iust, holy, and gratious: For euery good man will bee glad to see goodnesse in the people of his charge: both in loue to the parties in whom the image of Christ so shineth, which if it bee a matter of comfort to behold in any, much more to see it in them which are so neere vnto him: and herein a man shall see Gods blessing to himselfe, in the prosperous successe of his planting, sowing, building, and spirituall labours. Saint *Iohn had no greater ioy, then to heare that his children walked in the truth.* 3.Ioh.4. And Saint *Paul* thought that he could neuer be thankfull enough for such a blessing, vpon the Thessalonians. *For what thankes* (saith he) *can we render to God againe for you, for all the ioy wherewith we ioy for your sakes before our God.* 1.Thes.3.9.

Verse 17. *Let not thine heart enuie sinners, but be thou in the feare of the Lord all the day long.*

18. *For surely there is an end, and thine expectation shall not be cut off.*

LEt not thine heart enuie sinners,] Let not the prosperity and flourishing state of the wicked trouble thy mind, neither grudge or repine thereat: for from whence groweth this enuie, but from an ouer great estimation of earthly things, as though some part of happinesse consisted in the hauing of them? but bee *thou in the feare of the Lord all the day long.* He prescribeth a remedy against the euill which he had forbidden, *be thou in the feare of the Lord,* doe thou reuerently tremble at, and worship the Lord, and be soundly religious: for so thou shalt get power ouer this burthensome sinne of enuie: For true piety, and the grace of Gods holy spirit will illuminate the mind, and make a man see why such men are to be pitied, rather then enuied: for their prosperity is but vaine at the best, but worse then that, it is hurtfull and pernicious vnto them. This will kill pride, and discouer to a man his owne vnworthinesse of that which he hath, and therefore he shall haue little list to trouble himselfe about that which others haue. This seasoneth the soule with faith and confidence in God, and sweeteneth it with the delight of his holy word, which wil

expell

expell the bitterneſſe of enuie. *All the day long*, continually, in proſperity, and aduerſity, whatſoeuer thy ſtate be, or howſoeuer the world goeth with other men, our religion ought to be ſtable, conſtant, and continuall: for God is continually good, and gratious vnto vs, and therfore why ſhould not we be conſtantly ſeruiceable to him? there is no time when wee are out of his preſence; and therefore it can neuer be ſafe for vs to bee careleſſe of his worſhip; neither doth any moment paſſe without a bleſſed effect, that is beſtowed about his worke. Pſal 106.3. Luk.1.74.

For ſurely there is an end, and thine expectation ſhall not bee cut off.] Their wealth, their pompe, their pleaſures, whatſoeuer their hearts be moſt affected with, muſt ceaſe, and periſh together with themſelues and their hopes of perpetuity, *the tranſgreſſors ſhall bee deſtroyed together, and the hope of the wicked ſhall be cut off:* and notwithſtanding godly men bee full of afflictions, ſorrows, ſickneſſes, neceſſities, moleſtations, and diſgraces; yet all theſe, or whatſoeuer other calamities ſhall vaniſh away in time, and the hope of Gods fauour, and bleſſed reward from him, ſhall outliue all theſe, and take place when theſe be aboliſhed. *Marke well the vpright man, and behold the iuſt, for the end of that man is peace.* That which he deſired and expected he ſhall be ſure to enioy, a faithfull man ſhall not bee fruſtrated of his expectation, nor defeated of that which hee hopeth for: according as the Pſalmiſt ſaith: *The poore man ſhal not alway be forgotten, the expectation of the poore ſhall not periſh for euer.* For that is euer grounded vpon faith, and faith is ſurely grounded vpon Gods promiſes. Pſal.37.38. Pſal.37.37. Pſal.31.29.

Verſ. 19. *Heare my ſonne and be wiſe, and guide thine heart in my way.*

THis ſentence is inſerted (as it ſeemeth) as a concluſion to the premiſes, and a preface to the exhortation following. Seeing knowledge commeth by hearing, the ſpirituall father doth firſt will his ſonne to *heare*. Secondly, for as much as man may heare wiſe counſels, and bee neuer a whit the better, if he perceiue, or receiue it not: he biddeth him laying aſide all

ignorance, and childish follie, *to be wise*. Lastly, for that it is not enough to receiue the truth, vnlesse it bee loued, delighted in, and imbraced in the affection: hee exhorteth him to guide *his heart in the way*, that is, to cause his soule to affect and follow after the feare of the Lord, and not the way of the wicked. And this he doth the rather, because that voluptuous persons, and epicures, commonly haue hearing, and preuaile with those that refuse to hearken to Gods wisedome, and their hearts are often beguiled, and corrupted with voluptuousnesse, and epicurisme, which are not guided in the way of vertue and goodnesse.

Vers. 20. *Bee not among wine-bibbers, and riotous eaters of flesh.*

21. *For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to pouerty, and drowsinesse shall cloathe a man with rags.*

BE *not among wine-bibbers,*] Follow not the custome, nor company of such as haunt tauernes, and quaffe in one cup of strong drinke after another, *and riotous eaters of flesh*, bee not of their crue or society, who loue good cheere, and daintie meate, who immoderately deuour it. It is not vnlawfull to drinke wine, or strong drinke, but it is sinfull to drinke it too oft, and too much: whether a man bee drunken therewith, or
Isa.5.22. be strong to powre it downe without drunkennesse. Neither doth God forbid the vse of flesh, or delightfull food: for hee
Nehem.8.16. doth allow his people *to eate of the fat, and drinke of the sweet*: but to be cormorants, and bellie-gods, to fare deliciously euery day, as the rich man did in the Gospell, to liue in pleasure *on*
Luk.16. *the earth*, and *to nourish ones heart as in the day of slaughter, or feasting*, is condemned as vnlawfull and sinfull: for besides the mischiefe that these vices bring, both to the braine, stomacke, and whole body: beside the ruine and waste that they make in a mans estate; beside the infamie and reproch which they bring to his name, they corrupt the heart: they are impediments to Christian wisedome: they hinder a man from the fruit of Gods holy word: for all epicures are vnteachable, vntractable,

tractable, and profit nothing by the beſt counſels that can bee giuen vnto them: therefore ſaith the Prophet; *They haue erred becauſe of wine, and are out of the way by ſtrong drinke: the Prieſt, and the Prophet haue erred by ſtrong drinke, they are ſwallowed vp with wine: they haue gone aſtray through ſtrong drinke: they faile in viſion, they ſtumble in iudgement: For all their tables are full of vomiting, no place is cleane. Whom ſhall he teach knowledge? or whom ſhall hee make to vnderſtand the things that he heareth?* Iſa. 28. 7. 8.

The reaſon why ſurfetting and drunkenneſſe is to bee auoided, is, becauſe *the drunkard and glutton ſhall come to pouerty*, partly through their great expenſes, and partly through loſſe of time: and for that much eating cauſeth much ſleeping, and much ſleeping bringeth extreame pouerty. To make the vices of ſurfetting and drunkennes more odious, it is ſaid *that drowſineſſe ſhall cloathe a man with rags*, to goe in torne and patcht apparell; the pampering of his bellie draweth miſery vpon his backe, and cauſeth it to bee pinched with paine and cold, which is one plague threatned for all other, and is a ſmarting laſh vpon him: for that gluttons, drunkards, and ſluggards are very proud, as well as voluptuous, and would goe gaie, as well as fare delicately. And therefore a ragged coate doth much burthen their backes, and gall their hearts, and is a great corraſiue vnto them, and is as vnpleaſant as a vomit after their ſurfeit: but God will ſo ſerue them in their kind, by reſtraining them of that which they moſt affect, and impoſing that vpon them which they moſt abhorre: and this vile apparell is an eye ſore to themſelues, ſo it maketh them a gazing ſtocke vnto others, being many times the liuerie of a waſtfull vnthrift.

Verſ. 22. *Hearken to thy father which begat thee, and deſpiſe not thy mother when ſhe is old.*

HEarken vnto thy father, ſee chap. 1. 8. *that begat thee,* He yeeldeth a reaſon of the precept why parents are to bee regarded, becauſe vnder God they haue been inſtruments of

much good vnto vs, wee haue had our ſubſtance, our life and being from them, and conſequently in that reſpect wee are by them made capable of all the happineſſe which wee ſhall poſſeſſe, both in heauen or earth: and the Apoſtle to the Hebrewes aſſigneth this to be the cauſe why they are to bee regarded, euen then when they deale ſharpely with vs, ſaying, Heb.12.9. *We had the fathers of our fleſh which corrected, and we gaue them reuerence, &c. And deſpiſe not thy mother when ſhe is old*, think not baſely of her in thy mind, let her not bee vile in thy eyes: ſhew no contempt vnto her in thy behauiour: neglect no duty to her when ſhe is old, or weake, or poore, or little regarded by others: for no infirmities or wants can giue thee diſpenſation to ſet nought by her, or to detract any dutie from her; ſhe is ſtill the ſame that conceiued and bare thee: ſhee is ſtill the ſame, whom by expreſſe name, in ſpeciall maner God doth command thee to honour: the triall of thy loue and loyaltie to her in that eſtate will principally be made. Feare of the rod compelleth children to ſtand in awe of their mother, in her freſh yeeres, and vigour of her time, and whiles they be vnder her gouernment: and hope induceth many to be ſubmiſſe and obeyſant whiles ſhee hath ability to miniſter ſomewhat vnto them, or leaue them portions: but it is the feare of God, and a good conſcience, which worketh reuerence towards her, when they ſtand in no bodily feare of her, or haue no need of her, nor expect no benificence from her: but contrariwiſe ſhee is by Gods prouidence put vpon them for her reliefe and ſuccour.

Verſ.23. *Buy the truth and ſell it not, alſo wiſedome, inſtruction, and vnderſtanding.*

Ioh.17.17. BUy *the truth*,] What the truth is our Sauiour declareth in the Goſpel, *ſanctifie them with the truth, thy word is truth.* Therefore when he ſaith, *buy the truth*, he meaneth the knowledge and comfort of Gods holy word, and the profeſſion of the ſame with faith, and obedience, which hee admoniſheth vs to obtaine, and retaine with labours, with charges, to *buy*, that is, with

with perill (if need be) with ſuffering, if we be called vnto the ſame; not that there is any merit in any of theſe meanes: for Chriſt giueth grace freely, as he profeſſeth by the Prophet: *Ho, euery one that thirſteth let him come hither, buy wine and milke without price and money:* but that thereby wee are made more capable of them, & fitter for them. The wiſe Merchant bought the truth, when hee beſtowed all that hee had to purchaſe the rich Pearle. And the Hebrewes bought the truth, when they *ſuffered the ſpoyle of all their goods for the Goſpell.* And ſo did *Moſes* when he departed *with all the pleaſures of Egypt, to ſuffer affliction with the children of God.* This then hee informeth vs, that all good meanes are to be vſed, and no trauels or troubles to be refuſed for the getting of grace, and keeping of a good conſcience. For this is that, *one thing which is moſt needfull.* And this is that which will abundantly counteruaile all labours, coſts, diſgraces, loſſes, impriſonments, baniſhments, and killings. Isa.55.1. Mat.13.45. Heb.11.33.34.

But why hath not God appointed it to be more eaſilier gotten without ſuch paines, and inconueniences? *Obiect.*

Firſt, that it might be the better eſteemed: for things which are bought at a deare rate, and commonly moſt deerely beloued; and that a difference might bee put betweene faithfull Chriſtians and hypocrites: for there would bee many more profeſſors of godlineſſe then now are, if they might bee both religious and cenſuall, to enioy hope of heauen without paines taking, or ſuſtaining of any moleſtations: *and ſell it not,* eſtrange it not from thee, for earthly delights or commodities; nor make vile account of it, as commonly they doe of their poſſeſſions that ſell them. No earthly reſpect muſt corrupt our hearts to alienate them from grace and feare of God. This is the note of a prophane perſon. It is contrary to the nature of Chriſtian loue: he ſhall be a miſerable loſer that maketh ſuch an exchange, whatſoeuer pleaſures, profits, or preferments he getteth thereby: for *what ſhall it profit a man to winne the whole world, and loſe his owne ſoule? Likewiſe wiſedome, inſtruction, and vnderſtanding.* Now ſeeing wiſedome, inſtruction, and vnderſtanding, (of which three vertues much hath been *Answ.* Heb.12.16.

ſpoken

ſpoken of in this booke. As chap. 1.2.3. are pretious Iewels with the truth, they are in like manner to bee bought, and not ſold, becauſe the truth cannot be well enioyed without them: and no man can put them away from him, without ſhipwrack of faith, and a good conſcience.

Verſ. 24. *The father of the righteous ſhall greatly reioyce, and he that begetteth a wiſe child ſhall haue ioy of him.* See chap. 20. 1

25. *Thy father and mother ſhall reioyce, and ſhe that bare thee ſhall be glad.*

CAuſe both thy parents, and other friends, for thy wiſedome and vertue, to bee glad, and ioyfull, refreſh their hearts with the effect of Gods grace and ſpirit in thee, *and let her that bare thee reioyce.* This verſe is an application of the former, that for as much as ioy commeth to the parent by the vertue of the child: hee therefore admoniſheth the child for his owne happines to gratifie his parents. And this clauſe containeth an argument from the cauſe; ſince his mother hath bin at great paines in breeding him in the wombe, and with great ſorrow brought him forth into the world: and it is intended that her nurſing, education, and bringing vp, could not bee without ſome trouble and moleſtation vnto her. Therefore it becommeth him now to make requitall, and to yeeld her conſolation and refreſhing, by his prudent and vertuous behauiour.

Verſ. 26. *My ſonne giue me thine heart, and let thine eyes obſerue my waies.*

HE is about to giue another precept and admonition againſt whoredome; and therefore after his vſuall manner maketh a preamble to it, preſcribing a remedie for the preuention of this ſinne: and therefore in the perſon of heauenly wiſedome, calleth for the heart to be yeelded vnto him, ſaying, *my ſonne giue me thine heart*, let thy mind bee wholly intent, and applied to me, renounce thy ſelfe, and ſet thy loue onely

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and wholly vpon the Lord, and his holy word, *and let thine eyes obſerue my waies*, euen as men doe vſe to fixe their eyes vpon thoſe things with thy mind, and greatly regard, and eſpecially in their trauels looke to their way, where there is perill of miſſing it, and to fall into ſome hurtfull by-paths; ſo (ſaith he) let thine eyes diligently obſerue my waies, vſe thy vnderſtanding; bend thy thoughts and whole care; attend vpon my commandements, and counſels, which is the onely right way wherein thou ſhalt walke ſafely, and thereby bee preſerued from that inchanting harlot.

Verſe 27. *For an whore is a deepe ditch, and a ſtrange woman a narrow pit.*

FOr *an whore is a deepe ditch*, See chap. 22. 14. *and a ſtrange woman a narrow pit*,] Wherein a man cannot ſtirre himſelfe, or deliuer himſelfe out of danger, he is ſo ſhut in on euery ſide. A man may eaſily fall into whoredome; but when hee is once gotten into that bottomleſſe pit, and narrow hole, hee can hardly, or not at all come out againe. See chap. 2. 19.

Verſ. 28. *She alſo lieth in waite for a prey, and encreaſeth the tranſgreſſors among men.*

SHe is here deſcribed by her effects, which are acted with great craft and ſubtilty, which appeareth by the ſimilitude which he vſeth: euen as a theefe lurketh in a denne or buſh to get a prey: ſo this curſed woman lieth in wait, and with her art and enticements doth as it were aſſault the hearts of thoſe which come within her reach, and ſpoileth them of their affections and honeſtie, *and encreaſeth the tranſgreſſors amongſt men*, whereas there were too many notorious offenders in the world before, now by her practiſes there are many more added vnto them, being drawne in, and corrupted with this loathſome vice of adultery.

Verſ. 29.

Verſ.29. *Who hath woe? who hath alas? who hath contentions? who hath babling? who hath wounds without a cauſe? who hath rednes of eyes?*

Verſ.30. *They that tarrie long at wine, they that ſeeke after mixt wine.*

HAuing in the former verſe related the miſchieuous properties, and euents of the harlot, he doth in theſe diſcouer alſo the danger and hurt of that ſinne which bringeth intemperate perſons into her baite, and deliuereth them into her hands, namely drunkennes: the which to make the more odious, he deſcribeth the lamentable eſtate of drunkards. And firſt hee maketh an ennumeration of the ſeuerall calamities which befall them, by the way of an interrogatorie, or queſtion: and then accuſeth their intemperancy as the cauſe therof, by way of ſubiection, or anſwere.

Touching the former, he beginneth with the moſt generall, and that is *woe*, extreame griefe and miſerie, temporall, or euerlaſting: For the Scripture is wont to call euery heauie iudgement of the Lord in this life, and eternall condemnation by the name of woe: and then deſcendeth to perticulars, as that it inforceth him to crie out for miſerie, with groaning, and ſighing, and to bewaile his poore and miſerable eſtate: for ſo much the word importeth. And next that it cauſeth *contentious* brablings, and weepings: For drunkards at their cups are wont to cauell one with another, to brawle, ſcold, and rage like people out of their wits. See chap.20.1. Thirdly, it maketh them to *babble*: For when the wine is in the wit is out: For neither can they be ſilent, nor truſtely keepe any ſecret: then they fall to ſcoffe and ieſt one vpon another, vpon euery light occaſion, or talke vainly, or friuolouſly, without any vſe or wiſedome: or elſe inueigh bitterly againſt Magiſtrates, Preachers, and godly people. Fourthly, it procureth wounds without cauſe, not but that the drunkard deſerueth to bee wounded with puniſhment, but that they haue no cauſe to aduenture themſelues to ſuch perill: they muſt take the blame

vpon

vpon themſelues, as hauing no calling to draw them into ſuch dangers: they were not hurt in the field, nor in warfare: it was in no ſeruice for the Prince, or Countrie: either they fell downe, and hurt themſelues: or elſe for their raſh ſpeeches, or other diſordered behauiour, they receiued ſtripes, and ſo were wounded. Laſt of all, it hurteth the countenance, and diſfigureth the face, through heate and inflammation, which ſheweth it ſelfe in the *redues of the eyes*, much drinking cauſeth humours to abound in the body, eſpecially in the face, and namely in the eyes, which are thereby oftentimes blemiſhed, and almoſt blinded. The cauſe of all this conſiſteth firſt in the quantitie of that they drinke, and then in the qualitie of the ſame. The quantitie is, that they drinke exceſſiuely: For as they tarrie long at it, ſo all the time, or the moſt part of it, they are buſie about it: for a little ſerueth not their turne, but they muſt haue enough, to ſoke themſelues, and their braines in: and therefore call for cup vpon cup, and powre in one bowle full after another. Such are they whom the Prophet threatneth, ſaying, *Woe to them that riſe vp early in the morning, that they may follow ſtrong drinke: and continue till night vntill the wine inflame them.* Iſai. 5. 11.

For the latter it is ſaid, they *ſeeke after mixed wine*, either allaied, and made coole after the cuſtome of thoſe Eaſterne countries: or mingled with ſpices to make it taſte the better: howſoeuer it was, yet it was the more pleaſant and delicious: and likewiſe they thirſt after varietie, one ſort will not content them, and therefore not one houſe, where there is not great choice: for it is ſaid, *they ſeeke mixed wine*, ſearching in many places where they meete with the beſt.

Verſ. 31. *Looke not vpon the wine when it is red, when it giueth it colour in the cup, when it moueth it ſelfe aright.*

VPon the occaſion of the premiſed deſcription, hee inferreth an admonition to beware of that ſinne: and therefore preſcriberh a remedie wherby we may be preſerued from it, and that is, that we inamour not our ſelues with the delight of

of it, by the ſpecious colour, or pleaſant taſte: For though hee nameth but one adiunct, yet hee vnderſtandeth all the reſt. *Looke not vpon the wine when it is red*, illude not thy ſelfe with gazing too much vpon it. It was not made to pleaſe the eye, but with the moderate vſe of it to confirme the ſtomacke: *when it giueth it colour:* or as in the Hebrew, *the eye of it in the cup:* For when it ſhall haue a liuely and louely looke, it ſhall be graced alſo with the cleerenes and comelines of the glaſſe, or veſſell wherein it is: for then it hath the greater force to allure: *when it moueth it ſelfe aright*, when it ſhall ſtirre very kindly, leape or ſpirt in the goblet; in which words (as it ſeemeth) good wine is painted out, or reſembled to a faire and beautifull damzell: whoſe cheekes are ruddie: whoſe eyes are liuely and piercing: and whoſe feete are nimble, and dancing: by thoſe meanes ſhe doth draw the eyes of men toward her, and intangle their affections with her. All commeth to this, that prouocations to drunkenneſſe are to bee ſhunned with due care and diligence.

Verſ. 32. *In the end it will bite as a ſerpent, and ſting as an adder.*

LEſt the pleaſantnes of wine deceiue and illude our ſenſes, the bitternes and grieuous effects of it are here declared by way of compariſon. *In the end it will bite as a ſerpent, and ſting as an adder.* Some ſerpents hurt by the venomous biting of the teeth: and others by the ſtriking with the ſting, which they haue in their tongues: both ſort bring great torment, and indanger the life of the creature which is bitten, or ſtung by them, and as deadly will be the effect of wine immoderatly taken: at the leaſt it will trouble the braine, it will inflame the liuer, it will ouerwhelme the ſtomacke, and cauſe dropſies, and deadly diſeaſes in the whole bodie: beſides all this, it defileth the conſcience, it tranſformeth a man into the ſhape of a beaſt, it worketh moſt bitter and intollerable effects, both preſent and future: as we haue ſhewed in the 20. and 21. verſes.

And this is the euent of all delightfull ſinnes: they which

are

are led by cenſualitie ſhall certainly ſooner, or later fall into miſerie: they feele pleaſure at the firſt, and ſhall finde ſorrow and paine at the laſt, as *Zopher* truly affirmeth touching graceleſſe perſons: *Though wickednes be ſweete in his mouth, though hee hid it vnder his tongue: though hee ſpare it and forſooke it not, but kept it ſtill in his mouth: his meate in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aſpes within him.* Iob 20.12.13. 14.

Verſe 33. *Thine eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women, and thine heart ſhall vtter peruerſe things.*

THat which hee had more generally vttered by ſimilitude in the former verſe, hee doth confirme in this by certaine ſpeciall euils which doe accompanie this ſwiniſh vice of drunkennes.

The firſt is vnchaſtitie, a wanton eye, and diſpoſition to fornication and adulterie. The ſecond is licentiouſnes of tongue through want of good gouernment of the heart, and both theſe are in this verſe. The third is extreame ſecuritie, and ſenſeleſnes, imminent perill in the next verſe. The fourth is ſtupiditie and dulnes, when a man is ſo farre from reformation by the ſmart inflicted vpon him for his ſinne, as that he is made the worſe thereby, and more greedie to euill, in the laſt verſe. *Thine eyes ſhall behold*, thou ſhalt become ſhameleſſe, to looke, luſt after, and hunt after *ſtrange women*, ſometimes thine neighbors wiues, ſpecially ſuch as are comely and beautifull: and ſometimes ſtrumpets, and harlots, whoſe worke is to be filths, and naughtie packs: *and thine heart ſhall vtter peruerſe things: thine heart*, that is, out of the abundance of thine heart, (for otherwiſe the heart ſpeaketh not) *ſhall vtter*, vomite out, ſometimes blaſphemies, ſometimes railings, ſometimes filthie communication, alway that which God hateth, and godly men abhorre: For one ſinne vſually leadeth on to another, not onely in this caſe of intemperancie, but in all other crimes and vices. *Simeon* and *Leui* began with murther, and then fell to theft and robberie. *Dauid* firſt abuſed his eyes to

wanton

wanton lookes, and then his body to adulterie, and then his hands by a command (though not by drawing a weapon) to the ſhedding of blood.

Verſ. 34. *Yea thou ſhalt be as he that lieth in the middeſt of the ſea, or as he that lieth on the top of the maſt.*

Verſ. 35. *They haue ſtriken me (ſhalt thou ſay) and I was not ſicke, they haue beaten me, and I haue not feit it: when I ſhall awake, I will ſeeke it againe.*

TO ſhew the careleſnes of drunkards, he reſembleth them to thoſe, which for their vnnaturall regardleſnes of themſelues, are ſeldome, or neuer to bee found: namely, ſuch as in the very heart of the ſea, or very farre from the ſhore, and likewiſe in the higheſt part of a ſhip in the top of the maſt, expoſed to the venemencie and violence of the windes, and that in a boiſterous ſtorme, ſhould neuertheleſſe through the little care of their liues ſleepe there, and ſo the tempeſt ariſing hurleth them downe without all remedie: For when men be poſſeſſed with this, or any other ſinne, they will hardly be drawne from the practiſe of it. *Can the Æthiopian change his skinne, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may they alſo doe good that are accuſtomed to euill.* And the more danger ſuch be in, the more bold they are, and leſſe fearefull of hurt: for they neither beleeue, nor feare the threatnings of God, and therefore will not be moued with them, vntill they feele the execution of them: therefore *Ieremiah* complaineth of them, ſaying, *They haue belied the Lord, and ſaid it is not hee, neither ſhall euill come vpon vs, neither ſhall wee ſee the ſword, or famine, and the Prophets ſhall become winde: the word is not in them: thus ſhall it be done vnto them.*

Iere. 13. 23.

Luke 17. 26.

Iere. 5. 12. 13.

And thou ſhalt ſay] Here hee chargeth the drunkard with blockiſhnes and priuation of ſenſe: for hee ſpeaketh of himſelfe as if he were a very ſtocke, or ſtone: *they haue ſtriken me* grieuouſly and very hard: ſhalt thou O drunkard ſay, after thou art awake out of thy dead ſleepe of drunkennes, *but I was not*

not ſicke, I cared not for it, I was not much hurt, *they haue beaten me*, but I felt not their blowes: for drunkennesse taketh away almost all senses; and therefore though one thump them, or punch them, or lay load vpon them with great blowes, yet they think all to be well with them: what are they the worse? *when I awake therefore I will seeke it againe*: these, and those before in this verse, are rather the speeches of his practise, then of his lips, shewing the successe of his troubles and hurts, and that is continuance and proceeding in his brutish behauiour, notwithstanding all the inconueniences that follow vpon it: for no miseries that sinne bringeth can bring a man out of it, without grace. Such a prouerbe wee shall finde in another chapter, *though thou shouldest bray a foole in a morter, among wheate, without a pestill, yet will not his foolishnesse depart from him*: for they worke onely vpon the body and outward state, they cannot pierce vnto the soule, and inward faculties of it: neither will they make the mind iudiciall, or the heart penitent, as the Prophets complaine against the wicked Israelites: *Strangers* (saith *Hosea*) *haue deuoured his strength, and hee knoweth it not, yea gray haires are here and there vpon him, and he knoweth it not: and the pride of Israel testifieth to his face, and they doe not returne to the Lord their God, nor seeke him for all this.* Prou. 27. 29. Hos. 7. 9.

CHAPTER. XXIIII.

Vers. 1. *Be not enuious against euill men, neither desire to be with them.*

WHen the vngodly either rage in cruelty, or flourish in prosperity, the godly are often moued to sore passions, and exercised with wonderfull tentations. Sometimes they are stirred vp to anger and impatience, disdaining, and being offended that they which deserue the greatest iudgement of God, should receiue and enioy his greatest blessings in this

life: Sometimes they are tickled with a desire of being acquainted, and to bee in league with them, to the end they might not bee hurt by them, but liue together in prosperity with them. This enuying the wicked, and desiring to be with them, is forbidden in the former of these sentences as a thing vnlawfull, and greatly hurtfull: as there is no society nor fellowship betweene light and darkenesse, so likewise there ought to be in the godly no desire of the companie or condition of the vngodly. See chap. 23.17.

Vers. 2. *For their heart studieth destruction, and their lippes talke of mischiefe.*

THe reason of the prohibition is first, because *their heart studieth destruction*, they themselues in their hearts imagine and deuise hurt and harme against their godly neighbours: as godly men ponder and consider how they may best please the Lord, and mercifull men muse in what manner they may doe the best good, and be most profitable and beneficiall to their brethren: so these do beate their braines, and set their wits to worke, how they may accomplish their villanous designements. And secondly, *their lips talke of mischiefe*, that which in their malicious hearts they haue plotted and framed, now they polliſh and perfect with their lips: for they are the principall agents for the effecting of all wicked purposes: either they command with them, or perswade with them, or encourage with them, or direct with them; or flatter, lie, brag, or threaten with them; in one fashion or other they spit out venome with them. A leaud tongue is euermore a necessarie officer to a naughtie heart.

Vers. 3. *Through wisedome is an house builded, and by vnderstanding it is established.*

Vers. 4. *And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all pretious and pleasant riches.*

HE sheweth in these verses, that it is not needfull, or a point of true discretion, to seeke the society of the wicked

ked whoſe hearts and tongues are ſo hurtfull and noyſome: for God hath ordained better meanes, and ſuch as are far more comfortable to raiſe vp the ſtate of his ſeruants. An houſe can neuer be built to ſtand long, by a couetous heart, a deceitfull tongue, and an vnrighteous hand: but *through wiſedome an houſe is builded*, through godlineſſe and religion, eſtate and familie ſhall moſt happily bee erected, together with the attainment of all things neceſſarie for the ſame: and *by vnderſtanding*, of Gods will reuealed in his word, with conſcience and vprightneſſe to ſerue and obey the ſame, *it is eſtabliſhed*, made firme and ſure, that no curſe or enuie ſhall be able to caſt it downe; though the Lord in mercy and goodneſſe by his prouidence ſomtimes take it downe; *and by knowledge*, a right skill to gouerne that wherewith God hath bleſſed a man, *ſhall the chambers*, all the parts, and roomes of the houſe *bee filled with all precious and pleaſant riches*, ſtored with ſuch furniture as is fit for the owners place and degree, with this limitation alwaies that it bee vſefull and needfull for him, and not ſnares to puffe him vp with pride, or any way corrupt him. So that all ſound proſperity for a comfortable eſtate, doth grow from grace and piety: as the Pſalmiſt teacheth. For thereunto are Pſal. 112. 3. the large promiſes of God made not only for the life to come, but for this preſent life: and this heauenly wiſedome is euery where ioyned with prudence, and Chriſtian policie: and con- Deut. 28. 1. &c. taineth many excellent precepts of all good husbandrie for thrift; that moſt needfull things be done firſt, that ſuretiſhip be auoided, and many ſuch like.

Verſ. 5. *A wiſe man is ſtrong, yea a man of knowledge encreaſeth ſtrength.*

A *Wiſe man is ſtrong*,] Manageth his affaires, and effecteth his matters more ſucceſſfully, by the power of Gods gratious prouidence, and his owne commendable circumſpection, then he could haue done, or others doe, by meere force of bodily ſtrength, of friends, or of purſe, or of any other fleſhly or worldly power: *yea a man of vnderſtanding*, that is indued

with right knowledge, and wisedome *encreaseth his strength*, doth grow more prosperous in his attempts and matters which he vndertaketh, as he groweth more godly and iudicious. See chap. 21. 22.

Vers. 6. *By wise counsell thou shalt make warre, and in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

BY *wise counsell thou shalt make warre,*] In these words is proued the puissance of wisedome, because without it, power is nothing powerfull, armies of men and weapons will preuaile nothing without this: for the field is wonne not so much by mens strength, as by prudent ordering of the battell: and dangers are turned away not by the might and valour of the souldiers, but by the wise guidance of them, with the good gouernment of the Chiefetaines and leaders. See chap. 20. 18. *and in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.* See chap. 11. 14.

Vers. 7. *Wisedome is too high for a foole, hee openeth not his mouth in the gate.*

WIsedome,] Wisedomes (saith the holy Ghost in the Originall text) for the excellency of it, holy vnderstanding, the sound and sauing knowledge of God, whereby a man is directed vprightly in his feare, *is too high for a foole*, for a wicked graceless person it is aboue his sight, that he cannot discerne the pretiousnesse of it, and aboue his reach, that he cannot attaine to the possession of it: it is a fruit that groweth vpon the top of the tree of life, that such dwarfes without better helpe can neuer come at. No man then can bee made godly and wise by his owne naturall capacity; grace cannot be gotten without grace; which our Sauiour meant when hee said, *Except a man be borne of water and the holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdome of God.* And which the Apostle meant, when he said, *The naturall man vnderstandeth not the things which are of God:* for all that he apprehendeth, is either by

Ioh. 3. 5.

1. Cor. 2. 14.

by ſenſe, or by carnall reaſon, or at the moſt, and beſt, by naturall reaſon, which all come too ſhort of true wiſedome, the the treaſures whereof are hid in Chriſt with whom he hath no communion, and participated by the ſpirit, whereof hee is vtterly deſtitute, *he openeth not his mouth in the gate*, hee cannot ſpeake graciouſly, profitably, and laudibly in a publike meeting: for by gate, the places of aſſemblie are noted, which in old time was in the gates of townes or cities. There hee may ſpeake eloquently, and plauſibly as *Herod* did: but neither there, nor any where elſe, faithfully, or in ſuch manner as hee can haue any acceptance from God, for that which hee vttereth: for hee regardeth no other but the holy words of godly Chriſtians.

Verſ. 8. *He that deuiſeth to doe euill, ſhall be called a miſchieuous perſon.*

HE *that deuiſeth to doe euill.*] He that abuſeth his mind and cogitations to the ſtudie of wickedneſſe, how hee may bring to paſſe his vngodly and vnrighteous purpoſes, and effect that which is contrarie to piety, equity, or honeſty, and doth accordingly attempt the ſame to put it in practiſe, *they ſhall call him a miſchieuous perſon*, a notorious wicked man, and a captaine of miſchiefe: for as any ſinne is more perpenſedly, or aduiſedly committed, ſo it is more grieuous and ſhamefull: to tranſgreſſe by frailty is a fault, and deſerueth blame, but yet more tollerable, and that which may eaſily find pardon, but wittingly and willingly, and ſtudiouſly to do, and effect that which is euill, is abominable, and worthie of ſeuere puniſhment, and ignominie. *Woe vnto them* (ſaith the Prophet) *that imagine iniquity vpon their beds:* for this proceedeth from the loue of naughtineſſe, and the liking of miſchiefe: hereby they become skilfull, and are their craftſ-maſters in leaudneſſe: heereby they are made more impenitent afterwards, and can ſcarcely be reclaimed for euer. Mica. 2. 2.

Verſ.9. *The thought of fooliſhneſſe is ſinne, and the ſcorner is abomination to men.*

THe thought of fooliſhneſſe,] The leaſt degree of euill, euen that which is in the mind, though it breake not out openly, nor be ſo conſpicuons, *is ſinne*, the tranſgreſſion of Gods holy law, who requireth not onely the actions, but the mind of men to be conformable to his will: *but the ſcorner is an abomination*, it is an aggrauation of the contemptuous behauiour of wicked men, by an argument from the leſſe to the greater. God taketh notice of euil thoughts which are ſmaller offences, and yet vnlawfull, and to him diſpleaſing: but the ſcorner his execrable deeds, or crimes which ſhew themſelues to the world, which proceed from pride or preſumption, and are ſo continued in, are more then a ſinne, an abominable filthineſſe, which God and men deteſt and abhorre. And as concerning the ſcorner himſelfe who ſinneth with an high hand, and ſcorneth all good inſtructions, he maketh himſelfe odious to all that are ingenuous, and of any good diſpoſition; for they that giue themſelues profeſſedly to be impious & wicked, ſhall not only haue God, but alſo men to hate them: and equal it is; becauſe they hate and rebell againſt the moſt gratious & righteous God, who gaue vnto thē, & hath preſerued their life and being, and all that they haue: and who hath the diſpoſing of all mens hearts, and tongues, and therefore can eaſily direct them againſt thoſe which oppoſe themſelues againſt him, and violate his commandements, as hee ſaith by *Malachie: Therefore haue I made you to be deſpiſed, and vile before all the people, becauſe ye kept not my waies, &c.* And commonly theſe ſcornfull perſons are proud, inſolent, and contemptuous and hurtfull to others, and wholly giuen to ſeeke themſelues, which will greatly withdraw the loue of the people from them; as it was ſaid of Iſrael, *that his hand ſhould bee againſt euery man, and euery mans hand againſt him.*

Mal.2.9.

Verſ.11.

Verſ. 11. *Deliuer them that are drawne to death: for ſhouldeſt thou withdraw thy ſelfe from them that goe downe vnto deſtruction?*

DEliuer them,] This is an exhortation raiſed from the former ſentence, that if it be ſo dangerous a thing to neglect our brethren in their diſtreſſes and afflictions, therefore we ſhould ſhake off that remiſneſſe, and animate our ſelues to ſo neceſſarie a ſeruice: wherefore (ſaith he) *deliuer*, reſcue by thy power, (if thou art a Magiſtrate, as *Iob* did, who *brake the iawes of the wicked, & plucked the prey out of his teeth*) or by all lawful meanes whoſoeuer thou art, ſuch as being innocent are brought into danger of death, or vndoing: for if any be iuſtly troubled, or condēned to die, it belongeth not to vs to meddle with him, otherwiſe then by praying for him, & inciting him to repentance. But if might oppreſſe right, or violence be offered to the poore afflicted, euery one is bound to defend his neighbor frō wrong, as much as in him lieth: *For* (ſaith he) *wilt thou withdraw thy ſelfe from them that goe downe to the ſlaughter?* That is to ſay, Art thou to withdraw thy helpe from preſeruing the poore and innocent, who are layed downe on the blocke to be ſlaine, or drawne to the ſtake to bee burnt, from the ſtroke of the ſword, or flame of fire? So that euery one according to his place ought to miniſter helpe to the oppreſſed. Gouernours by vertue of their authoritie, as we ſhall ſee in the 31. chapter, verſ. 8. Inferiours by giuing counſell, or teſtifying the truth of the cauſe; or in petitioning to the Prince, or ſuch as haue power of deliuering: as *Ebedmelech* for *Ieremiah*; and *Eſter* for her people: or by prayer to God in their behalfe: as the Church in the time of the Apoſtles for *Peter:* and in the time of the Prophets, for other godly men which were deſtinated to the ſlaughter, whoſe petition we finde in the Pſalme: *Let the ſighing of the priſoners come before thee; according to thy mighty arme preſerue the children of death.* Act. 12. Pſal. 79. 11.

Verſe 12. *If thou ſay, Behold we knew not of it, ſhall not hee who pondereth the heart vnderſtand it? doth not hee know, that preſerueth thy ſoule? doth not he alſo recompence euery man according to his worke?*

HE confirmeth his ſtrict charge for aſſiſtance, and helpfulnes to our brethren wrongfully moleſted, and indangered, by forcible arguments: whereunto hee maketh a way by an anticipation, wherein he firſt propoundeth the excuſe that pitileſſe men are wont to make, and afterwards confuteth it. The obiection is, *we knew not of it:* For ſo they pleade ignorance, by which they hope to cleere themſelues, as that it was vnknowne to them that they were in trouble: neither were they acquainted with the equitie of the cauſe: nor vnderſtood by what meanes they might helpe them: all which pretences he plainly refuteth: for no ſhifts will ſerue to cloake ſinne before Gods eyes. And theſe hee refelleth by ſuch reaſons, as whereby hee proueth the neceſſitie of mercifulnes. And the firſt is from the knowledge of God, who is the ſearcher of the hearts and affections: putteth mens mindes, or meanings into the ſcales, or ballanceth them, to try how iuſt and vpright they are: and therefore doth not he vnderſtand whether thou diſſembleſt, or dealeſt in good earneſt? whether thou hadſt intelligence of the matter, or whether it were altogether hidden from thee? The ſecond is from the power and authoritie which God hath ouer all men: their liues and ſoules are in his hands: and therefore it concerneth them for their liues, and ſaluation too, not to halt with him, or be incompaſſionate towards his. The third is from the iuſtice of God, hee will recompence euery man according to his worke: he that dealeth vprightly, and without diſſimulation, ſhall finde comfortable approbation at his hands: he that dealeth fraudulently, and with guile, ſhall be diſmasked, and puniſhed: he that ſheweth mercie and compaſſion to them that be in miſerie, ſhall plentifully be rewarded with mercie from him: hee that is hard hearted, and without all bowels of commiſeration, ſhall finde pure iuſtice, without any compaſſion.

Iere.23.23. Eccleſ.5.5.

Verſ.13.

Verſe 13. *My ſonne eate thou hony becauſe it is good, and the hony combe, becauſe it is ſweete to thy palat or taſte.*

Verſe 14. *So ſhall the knowledge of wiſedome be to thy ſoule when thou haſt found it, there ſhall be a reward, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off.*

THeſe two ſentences containe the praiſe of gracious and holy knowledge, and that by a full ſimilitude, on both parts, as well the reſemblance, as the application from *hony*, ſaying, *My ſonne eate hony*, that is, thou haſt libertie for it, it is free for thee ſo to doe, if thou wilt, *becauſe it is good*, wholeſome, and profitable for thy body: it being a food much in vſe in thoſe parts: as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh; *Butter and hony ſhall he eate.* And *Ionathan* was much refreſhed, and his eyes receiued ſight by eating of hony, whereas before they were dimme for wearineſſe, and hunger. *And the hony combe, for it is ſweete vnto the palat or taſte*, that is, pleaſant, and delectable in reliſh, the palat the inſtrument of taſting being put for the ſenſe it ſelfe: two benefits therefore proceed from it, pleaſure, and profit: So both profitable and pleaſant, and more alſo *ſhall the knowledge of wiſedome be to thy ſoule*, thy heart, thy conſcience, thy inward man, though in thy body, and eſtate, there be many bitter croſſes and calamities: if *thou finde it*, if thou be truly indued therewith, and haſt a ſure apprehenſion thereof, and be not illuded with flattering conceits, and vaine imaginations. And this comfort and ioy is the effect of an infallible hope, which is wrought by faith in, and knowledge of the holy Scriptures, and this hope is ſtedfaſt, firme and effectuall: as chap. 23.18. He would haue vs therefore to vnderſtand that nothing is more delightfull then ſpirituall vnderſtanding of Gods holy will. Hony, and other food, though moſt delicious, is earthly, and the delight that it yeeldeth is but cenſuall: but this is heauenly, and ſo is the conſolation that it worketh: a beaſt, or a wicked man may feed on the beſt corporall foode, and feele as much ſweetnes as the worthieſt Chriſtian: but Gods owne people and ſeruants haue a peculier

Iſai. 7.15.

1. Sam. 14.27.

Iſai. 25.6.

lier right and propertie in the holy Ghoſt: there may bee in hony and other bodily delights, an hurtfull exceſſe, to the annoyance of thoſe which ſurfeit of them: as chap.25.16. but there can neuer be too much heauenly wiſedome, and gladnes proceeding from it: but alway, and continually the more, the better: the pleaſure that is taken in meates, or drinkes, or any earthly refreſhings, is but momentanie, and for preſent vſe: For when death commeth, or ſicknes, the delightfulnes thereof will be forgotten, and ſo will the ſtrength that commeth by it, and all other like benefits: but the ioyfull aſſurance of Gods fauour, the heauenly fruites of his holy ſpirit, with the poſſeſſion of his graces, is perpetuall and euerlaſting, according to the teſtimonie and promiſe of our Sauiour, ſaying, *Whoſoeuer ſhall drinke of the water that I ſhall giue him, ſhall neuer be more a thirſt: but the water that I ſhall giue him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing to euerlaſting life.*

Ioh.4.14.

Verſe 15. *Lay not waite O wicked man againſt the dwelling of the righteous: ſpoyle not his dwelling place.*

Verſ.16. *For the righteous falleth ſeuen times, and riſeth againe: but the wicked ſhall fall into miſchiefe.*

IN the former verſe was declared the great comfort that godly men finde in the knowledge of Gods holy word: and in theſe the great ſafetie which they enioy by his prouidence for them, and protection of them: for that is the ſcope of the words, though they bee directed to the wicked in way of admonition, or prohibition. The parts thereof are two: the one is a charge giuen to ſinfull men, that they proceede not on in their craft, or in their crueltie againſt the ſeruants of God, in the former verſe: and the other, a reaſon which could cauſe them to ſtand backe, and not offer ſuch iniuries to them, in the latter. *Lay not waite*, deale not ſubtilly, practiſe not any ſecret miſchiefe, like to ſuch as lurke in corners ſuddenly to ſurpriſe a man, or get ſome aduantage againſt him, *againſt the houſe of the righteous*, againſt a man himſelfe, or any thing that appertaineth vnto him: *ſpoyle not his reſting place*, offer no violence vnto,

vnto, nor prey vpon his goods, and especially goe not about to ouerthrow his dwelling place, nor chase him from it: For it is as if he should haue said, This is thy practise, and which is to be looked for at thine hand, vntill thou cease to bee wicked. For all thy attempts be in vaine, and shall take no place: and therefore if thou wert wise and prudent for thy selfe, thou wouldest be better aduised, before thou tookest such courses. The reason is from the contrary condition of the wicked, and godly: the one endureth many troubles, and escapeth out of them all: the other, oft times more crosses come vpon them for a time: but some one deadly stroke commeth at last for all, to their vtter vndoing: *The iust falleth seuen times*, commeth into troubles very oft, a certaine number of times being put for an vncertaine, *but riseth againe*, but by the gracious hand of God is deliuered out of them all. It is a similitude from childrē led of their parents, who though through weaknes doe sometimes stumble, and fall to the ground, yet they be neither hurt with the fall, nor helplesse, that they should not be taken vp againe. So that the goodnesse of God doth more appeare in sustaining his people in their troubles, then in preser- Psal.34.19.
uing them from troubles, as diuers Scriptures doe witnesse. Iob.5.18.
But the wicked falleth into mischiefe, the vngodly perish in aduersitie, being so ouerthrowne therein, that they neuer be able to recouer themselues: they are altogether like those, who falling from an high and steepe place, or tumbling downe a paire of staiers, breake their backes, or neckes, with that fearfull downfall, that they are not able to stirre hand or foote. So that albeit crosses come but seldome vpon vngodly men, and miserie tarrie long before it visite them; yet when God setteth in with them, he paieth them home, euen to their ruine and destruction: For so are they threatned: *The Lord shall shoote an* Psal.64.7.
arrow at them, their strokes shall be at once: their plagues haue stings with them, a guiltie conscience, the burthen of sin, with Gods displeasure and curse are ioyned with it.

Vers.17. *Reioyce not when thine enemie falleth, let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth*

Vers.18.

Vers. 18. *Lest the Lord see it and it displease him, and hee turne away his wrath from him.*

REioyce not,] Bee not glad, nor shew forth any outward signe of ioy, *when thine enemie falleth*, when hee that is thine aduersarie commeth to calamitie, or aduersity, *let not thine heart be glad*, doe not so much as conceiue ioy within thy selfe, though thou shouldest not expresse it to others, *when he stumbleth*, when any crosse doth befall him: hee taketh the similitude from trauellers, whom it concerneth not their fellow trauellers to insult ouer when they be downe or slipping, but rather be sorie, and therefore succour and helpe them vp againe. So that it is not lawfull for any man to take delight in his neighbours woe, howeuer he be affected toward him.

Iob 31.24. *Iob* cleereth himselfe of this fault, saying, *I haue not reioyced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lift vp my selfe when euill found him.* And the world knoweth how *Dauid* lamented and wept, when newes was brought him of *Sauls* death, which most iniuriously and cruelly hunted after his life. If wee be bound to pray for those that persecute and hate vs; if we be required to help our enemies with food, and gratifie him with other courtesies, it cānot stand with equity that we should reioyce at, or take pleasure in their miserie: but this precept may seeme to be contrary to the practise of the godly, as *Moses*, *Ester*, and diuers others of Gods seruants, when their enemies the Egyptians, *Haman*, and other such like haue been destroyed: but indeed neither *Moses* nor the rest, did reioyce so much in the destruction of their aduersaries, as in their owne deliuerance, and the preseruation of the Church: neither was the ruine of their enemies so comfortable vnto them as the glory of God, which did appeare in the punishment of the vngodly. A man may in holy zeale reioyce at the ouerthrow of the enemies of God, and the foes of his people, as chap. 11. 12. but he may not simply be glad at the fall of his aduersaries, nor vncharitably triumph ouer them with ioy of heart, arising from priuate grudge, and secret hatred, *lest the Lord see it*, lest he take notice of it, and obserue the same with displeasure, for hauing

hauing and nouriſhing ſuch vncharitabl and pitileſſe affections in thine heart, *and turne his wrath from him*, which is not ſo to be vnderſtood, as that therefore a man were not to reioyce at his enemies fall, leſt that by ſo doing his good name bee procured, namely the mitigation of Gods diſpleaſure, and remouing away the ſcourge that is vpon him: but by this euery one is warned to take heed of this reuengefull reioycing at the miſeries of them that hate him, leſt by this meane, hee draw Gods wrath and plague vpon himſelfe, and make his owne caſe worſe then his enemies.

Verſ. 19. *Fret not thy ſelfe becauſe of the euill man, neither be enuious at the euill doers.*

20. *For there ſhall be no reward to the euill man, and the candle of the wicked ſhall be put out.*

FRet not thy ſelfe,] Be not moued to anger and indignation, *becauſe of the euill man*, for that either they flouriſh and proſper, or elſe in the malice of their harts attempt euill againſt thee. *neither be enuious at the euill doers.* See chap. 23.17. and the firſt verſe of this chapter.

For there ſhall be no reward to the euill man,] His plagues and miſeries ſhall be perpetuall, *and the light of the wicked ſhall be put out*, his felicity, and flouriſhing eſtate, yea and his life it ſelfe ſhall bee extinguiſhed, and aboliſhed, deſperate miſerie ſhall ſucceed in the place thereof. See chap. 13. 9. And therefore the greateſt proſperity that vngodly men preſently enioy, is not able to counteruaile the lamentable calamity that ſhall come vpon them afterward: for the one is but counterfeit and mixed with many ſorrowes and feares; the other is as bad or worſe then it ſeemeth, and void of all comfort: the one is ſhort, and of no continuance: the other is euerlaſting, and hath none end: and adde this thereunto, that meaſure and great abundance of the former, doth much encreaſe the quantity and grieuouſneſſe of the latter. As is the caſe of that whoriſh Babel, *In as much as ſhe gloried her ſelfe, and liued in pleaſure, ſo much giue to her torment and ſorrow: for ſhe ſaith in her heart,* Pſal. 73.18. Iob 21.16.

Reu.18.7.8. *I sit being a Queene, and am no widow, and shall see no mourning. Therefore her plagues shall come at one day, death and sorrow, and famine, and she shall be burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord*
Iam.5.1.2. *which will condemne her.* And as Saint *Iames* threatneth to all worldlings and Epicures. *Goe to now ye rich men, mourne and howle, for the miseries that shall come vpon you: your riches are corrupt, and your garments motheaten.*

Vers.21. *My sonne feare the Lord, and the King, and meddle not with them that change.*

MY *sonne feare the Lord,*] Let thine heart alwaies stand in awe of his presence, worship him with reuerence, and holy deuotion: faithfully obserue and obey as much as possibly thou canst, his will and commandements, *and the King*, thy soueraigne, whom the Lord hath set ouer thee: for conscience sake be subiect to him: shew all loyaltie to his person, and obedience to his lawes, and ministers of iustice; neglect not the commandement of the Lord by the Apostle, saying, *Submit*
1.Pet.2.13.14. *your selues to all manner ordinance of man for the Lords sake: whether it be to the King as the superiour, or vnto gouernours, as vnto them that are sent of him, for the punishment of euill doers, and praise of them that doe well.* For true religion toward God, and due subiection to lawfull authority, are alway indiuiduall
1.Pet.2.17. companions. *Feare God* (saith Saint *Peter*) *and honour the King.* No rebellious person, or any that is disobedient toward the Magistrate, deserueth the name of a Christian. He that denieth vnto *Cæsar* that which belongeth vnto him, doth in no
Iud.8. vprightnesse performe to God that which is his due. Saint *Iude* maketh it a note of a sinful hypocrite *to despise gouernment, and to speake euill of them that are in authoritie. For there is no power but of God, and the powers that are, are ordained of God. Whosoeuer therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receiue to themselues greater damnation. Wherefore we must subiect, not because of wrath only, but for conscience sake.* So on the other side, neuer any impious person can bee a faithfull subiect: whosoeuer contemneth the

the Lord, and his word, which is the foundation of all magiſtracie, will (if occaſion ſerue) manifeſt his perfidiouſneſſe to his Prince; and though feare reſtraine him that he neuer break forth into armes, or open contempt, yet he carrieth not a loyall heart, becauſe he wanteth a godly heart. There are many which crouch, and bow, which flatter, and fawne, and highly extoll obedience, and inueigh againſt refractorie people, who notwithſtanding beare as little loue as the worſt, and yeeld no more reuerence in their hearts to their Prince, then thoſe which are moſt contemptuous. Saint *Iude* deſcribeth the deſpiſers of gouernment to be murmurers, and complainers, *and yet to haue mens perſons in admiration for aduantage.* And the Prophet *Hoſea* teſtifieth, that they which made the King glad with their wickedneſſe, and the Princes with their lies, did yet *deuoure their Iudges, and cauſe their Kings to fall. And meddle not with them that change*; he giueth a caueat to beware of the meanes whereby thou maieſt be ſeduced, and bee brought thereby to contempt of God, and thy Prince, and that is the ſociety of Male-contents who affect alteration, and nouelties, ſuch as are wearie of the holy Lawes of God, which teach religion, and Chriſtian obedience, and wholeſome lawes of Prince touching policie, and ciuill peace, and ſeeke for innouation, by abrogation, and aboliſhment of both: for ſuch maner of men are very contagious, and able to peruert the hearts of all that conuerſe with them. How many did *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* inchant to oppoſe againſt the gouernment of *Moſes*, and *Aaron*? What huge multitudes did that curſed *Abſalom* infect, and make to turne rebels moſt ſeditiouſly againſt the kingdome of *Dauid*? and did not *Sheba* that obſcure and baſe fellow preuaile farre to get aſſociates, and therby to raiſe a new commotion, when it ſeemed that all ſparkes of rebellion had been extinguiſhed? and how many millions of millions haue been ſtirred vp againſt the kingdome of Chriſt, by the peſtilent tongues of thoſe which cannot beare the burthen of gouernment, moſt lamentable experience of all ages doth cleerely witneſſe. This commeth to paſſe by the violence of their deſires that way, which are wholly ſet vpon miſchiefe; Iud. 16.

miſchiefe: and by the ſharpneſſe of their wits for this helliſh worke, which are ſharpned, and haue an edge ſet on by the diuell himſelfe, and by that proclitity which is in al fleſhly mens nature, to be corrupted by pernicious ſpeeches: Satan worketh in the tongues of theſe ſinfull ſeducers, and together alſo in the hearts and eares of their carnall hearers.

Verſ. 22. *For their calamitie ſhall riſe ſuddenly, and who knoweth the ruine of them both?*

HE confirmeth both his precept, and caueat, by the miſchiefe that is like to enſue, if they obey not the one, nor be admoniſhed by the other, and that is the ruine and ouerthrow of vngodly and diſloyall perſons: and this is exaggerated by the grieuouſnes and ſuddennes of it, it commeth ſooner then it is looked for, and is more intollerable then is either knowne, or thought of. *For their calamitie*, the plagues which they ſhall ſuffer, *ſhall riſe ſuddenly*. It lieth ſtill for a time like a fierce beaſt, or ſerpent in a buſh, or thicket, either ſleeping, or waiting for aduantage, and neither is ſeene, nor heard, there is neither roring, hiſſing, nor ruſling, and in a moment being either wakened, or ſpying the opportunitie, is vpon a man before he is ware. *Who knoweth the deſtruction of them both?* to wit, that which the Lord and the king ſhall work: For as Gods wrath is like a conſuming fire, ſo is the Kings compared to the roring of a Lion, both of them very fearefull and terrible. For miſerie is euermore contrarie to the expectation of the wicked, both for time and meaſure: it commeth vpon them before they be prouided, and lieth vpon them more heauily then they are able to ſuſtaine it. And this is becauſe they would not beleeue the predictions of the word, which foretold what would become of their wicked waies: but deſpiſed all Gods threatnings: and becauſe they are proud, and ſecure, and flatter themſelues in perpetuitie of their peace and ſafetie: and becauſe they ſuffer themſelues willingly to bee miſled and deceiued by the flatterie of others: as *Herod* did.

Pſal 73.18.

Iere.5.13.
1.Theſ.5.3.
Apoc.18.7.

Act.12.

Verſ.23.

Verſe 23. *Theſe alſo are the ſayings of the wiſe: It is not good to haue reſpect of perſons in iudgement.*

AS *Dauid* made not all thoſe ſpirituall ſongs which are contained in the booke of Pſalmes: ſo neither did *Salomon* (as it ſeemeth) vtter all thoſe parables which are ſet down in this booke of Prouerbs. Thus much may be gathered out of the words, wherein it is ſaid, *alſo theſe are the ſayings of the wiſe.* The ſentences from this place to the end of the chapter, were ſpoken by the mouthes, or written by the tongues of wiſe men: but who they were is not expreſſed: but ſure wee are they were led by the ſpirit of God, ſeeing otherwiſe neither could they haue been wiſe, neither would they who gathered theſe ſayings together, haue put them into the booke of canonicall Scripture, *to haue reſpect of perſons*, to regard any thing which is beſide the cauſe, or out of the matter in queſtion, as thereby to be led aſide, and drawne to peruert iuſtice, or decline from the law, as becauſe they be rich, or becauſe they be poore; becauſe they be good, or becauſe they be bad: becauſe they be friends, or becauſe they be enemies. To paſſe ſentence for the wealth; or power, or miſerie, or fauour, or hatred of the parties accuſing, or accuſed, *is not good*, neither lawfull, nor ſafe: the thing to bee regarded is the matter, and not the man. And therefore in all controuerſies, look not who be the parties, but what is the cauſe: becauſe the iudgement is Gods, and not mans. Leuit. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17.

Verſ. 24. *He that ſaith to the wicked, Thou art righteous, him ſhall the people curſe, and nations ſhall abhorre him.*

HE *that ſaith to the wicked, thou art righteous,*] He that applaudeth, or approueth of ſinfull men, whom God condemneth: or iuſtifieth any man in doing that which God doth not allow; *him ſhall the people curſe, and the nations ſhall abhorre him*, he ſhall be odious, and infamous, euery where, and amongſt all men for the greateſt part, eſpecially ſuch as hate

iniquitie, and know after what manner he doth countenance it. Indeed well diſpoſed perſons will not eaſily breake out into raſh curſing: neither will they proudly reproch the Magiſtrates, or ſuperiours, though they ſee them faile in their duties: yet neuertheleſſe in zeale toward iuſtice they cannot but blame them, whom they ſee ſo groſſely and notoriouſly to offend. So that they who goe about to grace others in their
Mal.2.8. ſinnes, take the way to bring themſelues into contempt: For they are an abomination to the Lord, as chap.17.15. and then how can they chuſe but be vile alſo amongſt men? They doe miſchiefe to many in animating ſuch wicked creatures: and euen to thoſe ſinfull wretches themſelues, by hardning them in their euill: they becommeth acceſſarie to the offenders facts, and maketh them their owne: and it is a fault, that is ſeldome to be found in any, who are not in ſome euill or other themſelues: according to that ſaying, *they that tranſgreſſe the law, praiſe the wicked.*

Verſe 25. *But to them that rebuke ſhall be delight, and the bleſſing of each good man ſhall come vpon them.*

Verſe 26. *Euery one ſhall kiſſe his lippes that giueth a right anſwere.*

HE amplifieth the point propounded in the former verſe, by the contrarie both behauiour, and euent: there was the iuſtifying of the wicked taxed, here the reprouing of him is commended: there was the curſe, or reproch threatned to ſuch as ſhall giue approbation to malefactors: here *bleſſing* is promiſed to ſuch as ſhall diſgrace them: obloquie, reproch, and hatred are there denounced as a puniſhment to them that ſhall flatter vnrighteous men: here honour and loue is aſſured to them that ſhall deale ſoundly, and ſharply with them: *but to them that rebuke him,* to them that conuince euill men of their faults, *ſhall be delight,* comfort, and ioy, in apprehenſion of Gods fauour, mens good affections ſhall be toward them, *and the bleſſing of each good man,* their teſtimonie which they will giue of them, and the prayers and praiſes which they will offer

offer to God for them: this bleſſing fell vpon *Iobs* head full often, as himſelfe witneſſeth, ſaying, *When the eare heard mee it bleſſed me, and when the eye ſaw me it gaue witneſſe vnto me, that I deliuered the poore that cried, and the fatherleſſe that had no helpe: the bleſſing of him that was readie to periſh came vpon me, and I cauſed the widowes heart to reioyce.* And it is added in the next verſe, *the people will kiſſe the lippes of him that giueth a right anſwere*; the kiſſing of the lips is a ſigne of loue amongſt vs, and in old time it was alſo a token of reuerence. Whereas therefore it is ſaid here, the *people ſhall kiſſe the lips of him that giueth a right anſwere*; the meaning is that they will exceedingly affect, and ſingularly honour ſuch a perſon: it may be the wicked will deſpiſe, and contemne ſuch a one, but the godly will reuerence and embrace him. Now he is ſaid to anſwer right things, who vttereth true, wiſe, and profitable ſpeeches, or ſuch ſayings as are agreeable to equitie and righteouſnes. He therefore which moſt faithfully oppoſeth himſelfe againſt the corruptions of others, ſhall gaine moſt comfort, and credit to himſelfe, both from God, and honeſt men, and many times from the parties reproued, or reſiſted: for that it may proue a good medicine for the curing of the maladies of the ſoule.

Verſ. 27. *Prepare thy worke without, and make it fit for thy ſelfe in the field, and afterward build thine houſe.*

PRepare thy worke without,] Haue an eye to thoſe things that are abroad, as for corne, cattell, vines, fruite trees, &c. *make it fit for thy ſelfe in the field*, make readie for thy ſelfe that which thou haſt in the field, that thou not onely haue ground, but that it be ſo husbanded, as ỳ it may beſt yeeld commodity to thee, that thou not only haue a croppe vpon thy ground, or graſſe growing in thy meddowes, but that it bee ſo carefully, and ſeaſonably cut downe, and inned, as thou maiſt enioy the fruite thereof: that thy land be not vnfruitfull through want of good manuring, or that which grow vpon it bee not the leſſe, or worſe by thine ill husbandrie, *and after*, when thou haſt performed theſe things, *build thine houſe*, make it large, or

faire, according to thy ſtate, and ſtore it with ſuch good furniture, as before was not requiſite for thee. An houſe, and habitation to dwell in is firſt of all to be prouided: but the ornaments, and beautifying of it, are to be deferred vntil thy maintenance will allow thee the libertie thereof. His purpoſe is to teach vs to proceede orderly in all our affaires, preferring of things of greateſt importance to the firſt place, and going about matters of leſſe waight by leiſure afterward: as in a building, ſtone and timber is to be prepared, before wainſcot and hanging.

And men vſe to buy land or take it, and haue a crop towards before they hire, or build a barne. It were a fooliſh part in feaſting to ſpread the table, ſet diſhes vpon the board, & to make the gueſts ſit downe, before any meate be prouided: or for a man to prouide bridle, or ſaddle, with trappings and all other furniture, and yet is able neither to buy, nor borrow, nor hire a horſe for his iourney.

Verſ. 28. *Be not a witneſſe againſt thy neighbour without a cauſe, nor deceiue with thy lips.*

BE *not a witneſſe*] In any matter, or for any mans cauſe, *againſt thy neighbour*, againſt any man, *without a cauſe*, whē he deſerueth it not, or thou haue no calling therunto, and therefore take heed that thy teſtimonie be not falſe: For al vntruth is falſe witneſſing, and without cauſe: neither affirme thou any thing certainly which is vncertaine, and ſtandeth only on likelihood and probabilitie: ſo *Eli* teſtified againſt *Hanah*, when hee charged her with drunkennes, becauſe hee ſaw the motion of her lips, but heard not the voyce of her ſpeech: ſo they teſtified againſt the Apoſtles and Diſciples without cauſe, when they ſaid they were full of new wine, becauſe on a ſudden they ſpake ſtrange languages: neither take halfe a tale for a whole ſpeech, nor adde any thing of thine owne to that which thou ſpeakeſt, nor peruert the meaning of a mās words which he vttereth: for ſo they witneſſed againſt Chriſt, when they informed that he ſaid, *I can deſtroy this temple*, that materiall

riall building of ſtone and timber, and *I will build it in three daies*, becauſe hee ſaid, *deſtroy you this temple*, meaning of his body, *and I will build it againe in three daies*. Laſtly, commenſe not a complaint againſt any for well doing, and impute not that to him for a crime which is dutie, and a good ſeruice: for ſo *Doeg* teſtified againſt *Abimelech* without cauſe, when hee accuſed him to *Saul*, for miniſtring reliefe and weapon to *Dauid* in his diſtreſſe. And ſo the enemies of *Daniel* witneſſed againſt him without cauſe, when they laid to his charge his prayer and ſupplication made to the Lord: *and deceiue not*, abuſe not the eares of any man to make him to beleeue that to be true which is falſe; or that to be good which is bad; or that to be bad which is good: him to be faultie which is innocent; or him bee iuſt which is vn-righteous: at no hand miſinforme the minds of thy brethren *with thy lips*, with the words which thy lips doe vtter.

Verſ. 29. *Say not, I will doe to him as hee hath done to me, I will reward euery man according to his worke.*

Say not,] By threats in ſpeech, or purpoſe of heart, neither let thy reuengefull paſſions or actions declare thy meaning: *I will doe to him as he hath done to me*, the iniuries that I haue receiued from him, I will requite vnto him, *I will reward the man according to his worke*, hee ſhall receiue as good meaſure as he brought: though I pay him home, and puniſh him ſoundly, may I not doe it? he began with me; I am prouoked to that which I doe; the fault is in himſelfe; hee was the firſt cauſe of his owne hurt. See chap. 20. 22.

Verſe 30. *I went by the field of the ſlothfull, and by the vineyard of the man deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

31. *And loe it was all grewne ouer with thornes, and nettles had couered the face thereof, and the ſtone wall thereof was broken downe.*

32. *Then I ſaw and conſidered well, I looked vpon it and receiued inſtruction.*

33. *Yet a little ſlumber, a little ſleepe, a little folding of the hands to ſleepe.*

34. *So ſhall thy pouerty come as one that trauelleth, and thy neceſſity as an armed man.*

THe Wiſe man, whoſoeuer he were, doth in theſe verſes, by his owne experience, liuely paint out, and deſcribe the ſhameful wretchleſneſſe of ſluggards, with the miſery & calamitie which they do incur them by the ſame. Firſt, he relateth the occaſiō wherby he was brought to ſee ſo far into the matter: *I paſſed*, (ſaith he) *by the field of the ſlothfull, and by the vineyard of the man deſtitute of vnderſtanding*: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, I went not as a buſie bodie to ſpie out the faults of other men which belonged not vnto mee. I made not a iourney of purpoſe to finde out what was amiſſe, in the mans behauiour, eſtate, or poſſeſſions: but my buſineſſe lay that way, I had iuſt calling to trauell thereby, and in regard thereof, *I paſſed by the field of the ſlothfull, &c.* whoſe idleneſſe, negligence, and want of forecaſt, conuinceth him to be void of vnderſtanding, or deſtitute of an *heart*, as the word ſignifieth: for it is as good to haue no heart, as to vſe none, as hee doth who is ſo remiſſe in affaires of ſuch importance. Secondly, hee relateth the matter ſubiect of his report, the obiect which his eyes apprehended, *and loe*, this *field, or vineyard was all growne ouer with thornes*, it was ful of brambles, and briers, nettles, thiſtles, burs, and ſuch like hurtfull weeds, had couered all the ground, that nothing could be ſeene but they, and theſe ſucke out the moyſture of the earth, and feed vpon the fatneſſe of the ſame, wherby the ground was much impoueriſhed, and made very barren: theſe annoyed the corne, or graſſe, the vines, or any other plants, & made them fruitleſſe, ſo that nothing could be expected but ſterility, and barrenneſſe: and beſide, *the ſtone wall was broken downe*, there was delapidation of wounds, ſo that ſwine might eaſily get in, and rout vp the ground, and euery beaſt had liberty to bark the trees, or browſe vpō the branches thereof, or make ſpoile of ſuch commodities as are greene therein:

therein: for idleneſſe is a very hurtfull ſinne, and euery thing is the worſe that ſlothfull perſons haue to deale in: and ſo *Salomon* teſtifieth, ſaying, *By ſlothfulneſſe the roofe of the houſe goeth to decay; and by the hands of the idle, the houſe droppeth through.* Eccleſ. 10. 18. Thirdly, he recounteth the vſes that he made of the ſight which he ſaw, whereof one was for himſelfe, and his owne benefit: he *conſidered it well, and receiued inſtruction*, he gathered wiſedome out of the follie of the ſluggard, and learned thereby that ſlothfulneſſe and follie are the mothers of pouerty, and miſerie, & in this he ſhewed himſelfe to be truly wiſe: for as much as heauenly wiſedome directeth mens minds to make that vſefull to themſelues, which is pernicious vnto others, and make the very ſinnes of their neighbours to be motiues to goodneſſe to them. Mal. 3. 15. Pſal. 4. 6. The other vſe concerned that lazie perſon, in whom hee obſerued the cauſe of that ruine and deſolation, and that was loue of ſleepe, and lingering in ſleep and drowſineſſe had ſo poſſeſſed him, as that hee was held as a bondman, or priſoner in it; whoſe very words hee reciteth to declare his captiuity in, and thraldome to that vice, *a little ſleepe, a little ſlumber, &c.* proceeding by little and little to a great deale, and can hardly finde a time to make an end thereof: & therfore for concluſion paſſeth the ſentence of beggerie vpon him, which hee threatneth ſhould come vpon him both ſpeedily, it would be ſudden, and certaine, as the compariſon vſed doth import; which ſee more fully expounded. Chap. 6. 11.

CHAPTER. XXV.

Verſ.1. *Theſe are alſo the parables of Salomon, which the men of Hezekiah King of Iudah copied out.*

THeſe,] The ſentences which are contained in this chapter, and the foure next as well as thoſe in the former chapters, vnto the 23. verſe of the twentie foure, *are the parables of Salomon*, ſuch as he, inſpired by the ſpirit of of God, did deliuer, whether by pen, or tongue, or both, it is vncertaine: it is probable that they were among the three thouſand mentioned in the booke of Kings, *which the men of Hezekiah King of Iudah*, which ſome by *Hezekiahs* appointment; (whether they were Prieſts or Leuites, or Prophets, or priuate perſons, God hath not reuealed) collected together, and ſet in order, being formerly here and there diſperſed, and being compiled (as it were) into a little treatiſe, they are by the authority of the holy Ghoſt incorporated into the booke, which hee himſelfe had compoſed and becoue a part thereof.

Verſ.2. *The glory of God is to conceale a thing, but the Kings honour is to ſearch out a matter.*

THe Lord doth much glorifie himſelfe by reuealing things, in that thereby he doth manifeſt his wiſedome, his goodneſſe, his iuſtice, his omnipotencie, and all the reſt of his diuine attributes vnto the world: and therefore the Prophet *Habakkuk* ſaith, *the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of God, as the waters couer the ſea*: but herein he is wonderfull glorious, that working, and ſhewing ſo much, hee doth yet reſerue to himſelfe of his counſels, and of his purpoſes, and of his workes alſo more then the world ſeeth. Some things hee couereth for a time, that no man may diſcerne, and yet bringeth them afterward

ward to light that all men may behold: and this falleth out often in his ordinary adminiſtration: ſome things, namely the myſteries of ſaluation, he manifeſteth to a few, to his elect, that none elſe, though neuer ſo wittie or learned are capable of; which our Sauiour acknowledgeth, ſaying; *I thanke thee O father, Lord of heauen and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and reuealed them to babes; euen ſo oh father becauſe it ſo pleaſed thee.* And this he doth by his gratious diſpenſation: ſome things he retaineth for euer from all men, that they cannot poſſibly attaine vnto the knowledge of; as the cauſes why this man is elected, and that man reiected; why one is appointed to ſaluation, and another deſtinated to deſtruction. And by this hee doth maintaine his abſolute ſoueraignty, that he will not ſubiect himſelfe to giue an account of his waies to his creatures, & to declare the plenitude, perfection, & infinitenes of his holy nature; and this is that which the Apoſtle doth ſtop all mouthes with, and himſelfe ſo much wondreth at, ſaying: *Oh the depth of the riches of the wiſedome of God, how vnſearchable are his iudgements, his waies paſt finding out! But the Kings honour*, it maketh much for the renoune of great Princes and Gouernors, *to ſearch out matters*, & bring them to light, that the craft of cunning and diſſembling perſons goe not beyond their vnderſtanding; and others haue not more skill in cloaking their facts and deſignements, then they haue in diſcouering and finding them out. This is the fruit of their wiſedome, this is the exerciſe of their iuſtice, and for this they ſhall be greatly loued, feared, and admired: as *Salomon* was in ſounding out the truth, though very difficult to to be found in the caſe of the two harlots. Rom. 11. 33. 1. King. 3.

Verſ. 3. *The heauens for height, and the earth for depth, and the Kings heart is vnſearchable.*

THe *heauens for height*, Doe exceed mens knowledge and skill, *and the earth for depth*, goeth beyond all the reach of his vnderſtanding, *and the Kings heart*, his thoughts, proiects, wiſedome and vnderſtanding *is inſearchable*, more politicke and prudent, then their ſubiects can vnderſtand: for

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thoſe gouernours whom the Lord in goodneſſe liſteth vp, the royall thrones are by him indued with an excellent ſpirit, and adorned with ſuch gifts as for the moſt part are not to bee found in priuate perſons: if any Princes by reaſon they giue themſelues rather to vanitie then the ſtudie of wiſedome, bee not ſuch, yet ſuch they ought to bee: for ſeeing they haue to deale in great and weighty matters, it is required of them that their wits, counſels, purpoſes, and determination of matters, be rare, profound, and paſt the common reach. All Princes attaine not to this, nor many: diuers are as ignorant, ſimple, and ſhallow witted, as thoſe that are farre their inferiours: but it is through their owne default, becauſe they want the loue of vnderſtanding and diligence; or neglect thoſe meanes whereby it is to bee gotten. As *Rehoboams* heart was ſo farre from mounting vp to the top of heauen, or piercing downe to the centure of the earth, as that it was not a yard high, or a foote deepe; but it was becauſe he laboured not to be iudicious, nor entertained good counſell when it was offered vnto him; but as for *Salomon* his father, who knew the words of wiſedome, and prayed for it at the hand of God, God gaue him wiſdome, *exceeding much, and a large heart as the ſand on the ſea ſhore, his wiſedome excelled the wiſedome of al the children of the Eaſt, and the wiſedome of Egypt: for he was wiſer then any man.* No bad cauſe was too hard for him to detect, no practiſes which he did not ſmell out: no complotters which hee did not ſpeedily intrap in their wiles. *Adoniah* did eaſily illude *Bathſheba* his mother, but ſo hee could not him: for hee eſpied out his treaſon, with *Abiathers*, and *Ioabs*, at the very motioning of the match, which he deſired might be betweene him and *Abiſhag* the Shunamite.

Verſe 4. *Take the droſſe from the ſilner, and there ſhall proceed a pot for the finer.*

5. *Take the wicked from the King, and his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed in indgement.*

TAke the droſſe from the ſilner,] For the vnderſtanding of theſe words, we muſt obſerue the ſenſe of the ſimilitude, which

which is this: euen as when the droſſe is remoued from the ſiluer, there remaineth nothing but good and pure matter, for the finer to frame a good veſſell of: ſo when the wicked is taken away from the King, there will be equitie and iuſtice, and ſo his throne thereby ſhall be eſtabliſhed: and herein firſt the wicked are compared to droſſe, as they are alſo in *Ezechiel* Ezech.22.19. for droſſe hath no good mettall in it, but is a kind of vnprofitable earth: ſo in them is no good to bee found, but pride, worldlineſſe, &c. And hypocriſie at the beſt is like to droſſe which is mixed with ſiluer: droſſe will neuer be melted, what paines ſoeuer be taken with it; nor they humbled, or brought to repentance, what meanes ſoeuer be vſed with them: droſſe will not ſerue for plate, nor be conuerted into coyne or ornaments: neither will they bee fitted for the worſhip of God, or any holy ſeruices. Secondly, the King is compared to a finer; for that it belongeth to him to purge away wicked perſons, and redreſſe things that are amiſſe. And thirdly, the kingdome or State to fined ſiluer, or a veſſell made therof. Now we muſt ſpeake more perticularly touching the application in the ſecond verſe, *take away, &c.* Hee intendeth not to giue liberty to ſubiects at their pleaſure, to baniſh licentious and diſſolute men: for that were an intollerable preſumption; but it is a direction giuen to Princes to informe them of their dutie, that they ought not permit wicked men to conuerſe with them, or to haue countenance from them. *Dauid* after a ſort vowed before he came to the crowne, that he would ſurely abandon all impious perſons, when the ſword ſhould be put into his hand, ſaying, *A froward heart ſhall depart from me, I will not know a* Pſal.101.4. *wicked perſon:* for they are euery way exceeding harmefull, and pernitious to Princes, and Magiſtrates, by corrupting and poyſoning their hearts with ſinfull counſell, as did the counſellors of *Darius*, by applauding and praiſing them in their faults; as did *Herods* flatterers, by falſe and malitious com- Dan.6. plaints againſt innocent men: as did *Doeg*, and *Haman*, by Heſt.12. oppoſing and ouerthrowing all good inſtructions giuen vnto them: as did *Pharaohs* ſorcerers, and *Reboboams* young companions; and blemiſhing their honour and eſtimation, as *Sheb-*

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na did *Hezekiahs*; and endangering their eſtate by committing euill themſelues, and drawing them alſo into it: as in this text appeareth by the reaſon from the contrary, *his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed in iudgement*: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Hee would be righteous, if they were expulſed from him, and his equitie and iuſtice would eſtabliſh his throne, would bring ſafety, and gouernment, and kingdome, which cannot bee expected, while ſuch peſtiferous wicked perſons are ſo intimate with him.

Verſ. 6. *Put not forth thy ſelfe before the King, nor ſtand in the place of great men.*

7. *For better it is that it be ſaid vnto thee, Come vp hither, then that thou ſhouldeſt bee put lower, in the ſight of the Prince whom thine eyes haue ſeene.*

THe holy Ghoſt in theſe ſentences calleth euery one from vaine boaſting, eſpecially before Princes, who by reaſon of their high places cannot abide arrogancie; and by reaſon of the power wherewith they are armed, will not ſuffer it goe vnpuniſhed: *put not forth thy ſelfe before the King*, make no ſhew of any brauerie, or excellencie before a Prince, *and ſtand not in place of great men*, intrude not thy ſelfe into thoſe roomes whereunto thou art called, but belong vnto men of greater account. The reaſon from the compariſon of contrary effects followeth: *for it is better, &c.* it is a more comfortable and commendable thing, that when thou ſeateſt thy ſelfe in a low place, thou be called vp to an higher, then that when thou haſt placed thy ſelfe in an high roome, a man of better degree or account comming in, thou bee cauſed to ſit downe lower, and giue place vnto him: as thou by experience haſt ſeene for to come to paſſe to the ſhame of many.

Verſ. 8. *Go not forth haſtily to ſtrife, leſt thou know not what to do in the end therof, when thine enemy hath put thee to ſhame.*

AS before the ſpirit of God hath taught vs modeſty, and diſſwaded vs from inſolencie and pride; ſo now hee willeth

leth vs to take heed of contention, which vice bringeth ſhame as well as the other, *goe not forth haſtily to ſtrife*, if thou bee vniuſtly purſued, maintaine thy cauſe as well as thou canſt, ſo that it be in equitie, and after a due manner; but bee thou not forward in moleſting of others, goe not forth as aſſailants, and challengers, as champions vſe to doe. For from them is the ſimilitude taken as it ſeemeth: if thou muſt needs be a partie in ſuite, be the defendant, rather then haſtily to contend: for it is great wiſedome (if it be poſſible) to be at peace with all men, and to follow after peace by all meanes; which if wee cannot obtaine, let vs obſerue theſe rules in all our controuerſies: firſt, that the iuſtice and equitie of our cauſe appeare vnto vs. Secondly, that the matter for which we contend bee of moment, and ſuch as with good warrant from God we may ſafely deale in. Thirdly, that wee firſt offer condition of peace and agreement to the partie whom we are compelled to contend with, as by mouing him to compremit the matter, and refer it indifferent arbitrators. Fourthly, that we ouermatch not our ſelues with aduerſaries too ſtrong for vs, or willingly bring the matter before corrupt and vnequall Iudges, (See chap. 17. 14. in the doctrine) leſt thou thereby be brought to ſuch extremity, that *thou know not what to doe*, againſt thine aduerſarie, or in thine owne defence: and this hee ſpeaketh, not onely becauſe raſhneſſe cauſeth men to ruſh into things vnlawfull, but depriueth them (as it were) for a time of all their ſenſes, *in the end thereof*, when the matter hath been heard, and the cauſe ſentenced, *when thine neighbour hath put thee to ſhame*, when thine aduerſarie, or the partie whom thou haſt iniurioufly moleſted, hath giuen thee the foile and ouerthrow, and hath obtained of the Iudge that it bee done to thee as thou thoughteſt to haue done to him, and ſo either put thee to pay the ſame charges which hee ſhould haue borne, or ſuffer the ſame puniſhment which he ſhould haue ſuſtained.

Verſ. 9. *Debate thy cauſe with thy neighbour, and reueale not thy ſecret to another.*

Verſ. 10.

Vers. 10. *Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamie turne not away.*

DEbate thy cause with thine neighbour,] Dispute thy cause louingly with thy brother: *If thy brother hath offended thee, goe tell him betweene him and thee alone: and reueale not the secret of another,* as for the priuate and priuie offence committed by him, which is onely knowne vnto thy selfe, declare it not vnto any, if thine owne admonition may preuaile with him.

Lest he that heare thee put thee to shame,] Left in stead of credit which thou seekest after, thou procure vnto thy self discredit from him vnto whom thou tellest the tale, who perceiuing thee to blaze abroad the infirmitie of thy friend, will repute thee a back-biter, or tale-bearer: *and thine infamie turne not away,* left the leaud opinion that is had of thee, and that report that is giuen out of thy vncharitable dealing continue longer then thou diddest imagine, and the blot and shame thereof be perpetuall. So that they which lay open the secrets of their friends, commonly bring most and longest disgrace vpon themselues. For thereby they discouer their owne malice and vnfaithfulnesse, which is a more enormous vice, then their neighbours frailty: they breake the rule of our Sauiour, which would haue vs by loue and merciſull dealing to cure and hide our brethrens faults; they breake the noble and ancient rule of equitie, *What soeuer you would that men should doe to you, the same doe you to them:* and likewise that of the Apostle grounded vpon the same foundation, *put them in mind to* Tit. 3. 23. *to speake euill of no man, for we our selues were somtimes foolish, disobedient, &c.*

Verse 11. *A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of siluer.*

EVen as siluer pictures set out, or beautified with golden, or guilded apples, grapes, pomegranets, or other fruites, or flowers,

flowers, are pleaſing and delightfull to the eye, both for varietie of rich matter, and diuerſitie of artificiall formes: *So a word*, ſentence, or ſpeech containing true, waightie, & wholeſome matter, and vttered in comely and decent manner, is very wiſe and acceptable to a iudicious eare. Such an ornament it is, and honour for a man to order his tongue aright, when the truth in a matter of importance is garniſhed with wiſe and diſcreete handling, all due circumſtances (of perſons, time, and place, vehemence or ſoftnes, prolixitie or briefnes, and euery other of like nature) concurring.

Verſ. 12. *As an eare-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold: ſo is a wiſe reprouer to an obedient eare.*

THe ſenſe is, that the wiſe reprouer, or inſtructer, who louingly, and ſeaſonably telleth a man of his fault, or dutie, is more beneficiall to the eare, and conſequently to the heart and whole man of him, which is attentiue to hearken, and obedient to performe, then if hee ſhould grace his eare with an eare-ring, or beſtow a rich Iewell vpon them: For the grace of Gods ſpirit which hee is vſed as an inſtrument to conferre, is farre more precious then all gold or Iemmes: and the inward garniſhing is incomparably more glorious then outward decking. So that good mens counſell is of no ſmall valew and worth to good men. If our Sauiour had cloathed the woman of Samaria with cloath of gold, and hanged vpon her as many Iewels and precious ſtones, he had not ſo richly adorned her, nor brought her to that honour, as he did by that gracious and well tempered conference: For what can more commend a man, or make him ſhine ſo bright, as that which helpeth to remoue away the ragges of his corruption, and further him to repentance, that he may bee clad with righteouſnes? by this he is made acceptable to God, and godly Chriſtians: and free from the danger of reproch, which can come from the tongue of any wicked depraued.

Verſ. 13.

Verſ.13. *As the cold of ſnow in the time of ſommer: ſo is a faithfull meſſenger to him that ſendeth him.*

THe inhabitants of thoſe hot countries, vſed to coole their drinke in ſommer with cold ſnow water, which they gathered in winter, and reſerued till that ſeaſon. Let it not ſeeme ſtrange though here mention made of ſnow in harueſt, which if it would fall on the ground, would be vnſeaſonable, & hurtfull thereunto, as wee ſhall ſee in the beginning of the next chapter: but the water thereof which is moſt cold, put into drinke, to coole the ſame, doth much refreſh them that labour hotly in harueſt worke: or otherwiſe are oppreſſed, and made faint with extremitie of heate: as may appeare in the 25. verſe of this chapter. Now vnto ſnow water reſerued, and thus applied, is a ſpeedie and truſtie meſſenger here fitly reſembled: for by his good newes hee greatly reuiueth the longing and languiſhing mindes of thoſe who ſent him about their buſineſſe, who during the time of his abſence, through feare and doubt were almoſt halfe dead. For they which vſe good men in their meſſages, or other affaires, doe commonly finde good ſucceſſe therein: as did *Abraham*, and *Cornelius*: and when *Dauid* heard that *Abimaas* was comming towards him, hee concluded becauſe he was a good man, he would ſurely bring good tidings: ſuch will not faile to be truſtie, and diligent: they will manage their affaires with wiſdome, and diſcretion, and Gods Angels and bleſſings doe accompanie them, and their actions, to make them fortunate and proſperous. See chap.13.verſ.17.

Verſ.14. *Who ſo boaſteth himſelfe of a falſe gift is as clouds, and raine without water.*

CLoudes and winde in drought, when ground chops and chawnes for want of moiſture, and graſſe, and corne, and the fruites of the earth begin to wither, doe put the husband-

man

man in great hope that the weather wil alter, and ſtore of raine will fall ſhortly; which if it come not to paſſe, but their expectation be deceiued, doth adde vnto their griefe through the defeatment of their hope: and ſo diſſemblers, and ſuch as make ſhew of great liberalitie, are much depended vpon for a time, and great confidence is repoſed on them: but when they feed men with bare words and pretences, and neither performe any good, nor meane it, they double the ſorrowes of thoſe needie people who waited for their helpe, and had rather been without their promiſes, then to bee nothing the better for them: for miſerie is made the more miſerable, when a man is gulled and illuded by deceiuers.

Verſe 15. *By long forbearance is a Prince perſwaded, and a ſoft tongue breaketh the bones.*

GReat perſonages are for the moſt part more vehemently incenſed when they are angrie, then meaner men: becauſe their mindes are greater, and take it for an indignitie not to be ſatisfied in their wils: yet by modeſtie, and meekenes, by patience, ſilence, and forbearance *is a Prince pacified:* great Rulers are appeaſed when they ſee they are not incountred: when not indutifull replie is made vnto them: when there is no dogged countenance, nor muttering language againſt them, *and a ſoft tongue*, milde and lowly words vttered with the tongue, *breaketh the bones*, ouercommeth ſtout and hard mindes, which otherwiſe would not yeeld, and aſſwageth the greateſt rage and anger, which otherwiſe cannot be extinguiſhed, that is attributed to the minde which properly belongeth to the body, the ſtrength of the creatures much conſiſting in the greatnes of the bones. It was ſaid of *Iſakar*, that hee ſhould be *a ſtrong aſſe*, or an *aſſe of bone*. It is like vnto an oyle which will not onely ſupple the fleſh, and outward parts of the man, but ſoke euen vnto the very bones, and haue an operation therein. See the doctrine of the firſt verſe of the 15. Chapter. Gen. 29. 1.

Verſ.16. *Haſt thou found hony, eate ſo much as is ſufficient for thee, leſt thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.*

HAſt thou obtained any thing that is pleaſant and delightfull, moderate thy ſelfe in the vſe of it, *eate ſo much as is ſufficient for thee*, but no more, *leſt thou be filled therewith*, ſated with eating ouermuch, and *vomit it*, annoying thy ſtomacke, and ſhaming thy ſelfe with the rauenouſnes of thine vnbridled appetite. A meaſure therefore is to bee kept in all things, euen in thoſe things which are moſt pleaſant: for exceſſe will make the beſt things bitter and vnſauourie: For what is ſweeter then hony if it be moderatly taken? yet if any eate too much thereof it cauſeth loathing, and caſting; and ſo will all delights of the world which are abuſed aboue meaſure, they will bring paine and ſorrow after them: too much of euery earthly thing is hurtfull, as of meate and drinke, of gold, ſiluer, and money; of garments and apparell, of pleaſures and delights: Chap.21.17.

Iſai.28.7. Hab.2.5. Iam.5.3.

Verſe 17. *Withdraw thy foote from thine neighbours houſe, leſt he be wearie of thee, and ſo hate thee.*

THis ſeemeth to be a perticular application of the former precept, that as hee would not haue men to glut themſelues in other delights which our natures doe affect: ſo hee would not haue vs to exceed in preſſing too hard vpon, or ouerlaying a kinde friend: For though his table or houſe bee in ſweetnes like home, yet if a man will haunt it without all meaſure, or modeſtie, he will make his deareſt friend to whom hee was wont to be moſt welcome, to grow wearie in time of ſuch a daily gueſt: therefore ſaith hee, *withdraw thy foote*, or as the word is, make it precious at thine neighbours houſe. Chriſtians muſt learne not to bee burthenous one to another. It ſtandeth not with the ingenuous heart of a good man ſo to doe: it is not agreeable to loue and charitie: it proceedeth not from prudence and wiſedome: it depriueth vs of much of our

1.Theſ.29. 2.Theſ.3,8.

our libertie and honour: it is a thing to be more glorious to bee ſeruiceable to our brethren, as Chriſt was, then to bee chargeable to them.

Verſe 18. *A man that beareth falſe witneſſe againſt his neighbour, is a maule, and a ſword, and a ſharpe arrow.*

A *Man that beareth falſe witneſſe*] Which either doth lay things to his charge as an accuſer, or vndertaketh to iuſtifie other mens falſe complaints by his teſtimonie, or raiſeth vp, and diſperſeth ſlanderous reports, *againſt his neighbour*, againſt any man whereby his life, or limmes, or his ſtate, or familie, or credit might be indangered, dealeth as if hee ſhould ſtrike his neighbour with a maule, and ſo knocke him on the head: or run at him with a ſword, and let out his bowels, or ſhoote a ſharpe arrow at him which will pierce deeply, and ſtrike him at the heart: to all theſe three inſtruments of death is a malicious tongue fitly compared: For that many times it doth as much miſchiefe as any of them all, becauſe the name of a good man is as deare vnto him, as the beſt member of his bodie: & life it ſelfe is often deſtroyed by the virulent tongues of malicious accuſers. If *Naboths* enemies had knockt out his braines with a club; or runne him thorow with a ſword; or ſhot a quiuer full of arrowes at him, could they poſſibly haue equallized that crueltie of traducing him to be a traitor againſt the King, and a blaſphemer of God, to the deſtruction of his life, ruine of his houſe, and perpetuall reproch of his name, if the Lord by a marueilous fauour to him, and iuſtice againſt his aduerſaries, had not miraculouſly cleered him. See 1. King. 2. chap. 12. 18.

Verſe 19. *Confidence in an vnfaithfull man is as a broken tooth, and a hand out of ioynt.*

C*Onfidence*] Truſt, and affiance repoſed *in an vnfaithfull man*, in a diſſembler, who meaneth nothing leſſe, then the kindneſſe which hee maketh ſhew of, *is as a broken tooth*, that

faileth and paineth him, that goeth about to chew his meate therewith, *and a foote out of ioynt*, which tormenteth, and diſappointeth him that ſetteth it on the ground to go: neither can *the broken tooth, or foote out of ioynt*, doe their office: but are vnprofitable, and painfull. A deceitfull friend then turneth to the hurt of him that dependeth vpon him: by diſappointing him of his expectation, as *Iob* complaineth of his friends, that they deceiued him like a *brooke*, which is full of water in winter, when enough is to be had euery where elſe: but as a drie pit in ſommer vtterly failing the paſſengers that come in hope to quench their thirſt thereat.

Iob.6.15.

And *Dauid* complaineth of his acquaintance that they ſtood farre off from him. And it was no ſmall griefe to *Paul* when he had moſt need of helpe to be forſaken of all, and aſſiſted of none: and this is commonly done with ſome calumniation, or vnder colour or pretext of ſome deſert of his, as that he was worthie to be left to himſelfe: and at laſt ſuch a friend turneth to be a moſt malitious and bitter aduerſarie: as *Dauid* found *Achitophel* to be.

1.Tim.4.16.

Verſ.20. *As hee that putteth on a garment in cold weather, and powreth vineger vpon nitre: ſo is he that ſingeth ſongs to an heauie heart.*

THe purpoſe of this is, to demonſtrate the ſweete conſolation and refreſhing, which a wiſe and faithfull comforter doth miniſter to a penſiue and afflicted mind, and that by three compariſons: the firſt is *warme cloathes in cold weather*, whereof euery man by his owne experience, ſenſe, and feeling, doth know the delight and commoditie: the ſecond is the *powring of vineger vpon nitre*, which (as writers ſay) is a matter or ſubſtance much like vnto ſalt, but is not ſalt, with holes like a ſponge: it is to bee found in Iudea, Egypt, and thoſe parts, made hard by the Sunne, which is quickly diſſolued and waſted by vineger, though by heate compacted together it hath the hardnes of a very ſtone: and as much doe the conſolatorie comforts of a louing and godly friend mitigate and conſume the

the ſetled griefe of the heart. The third is muſike, or melodie, it is called the *ſinging of ſongs*, chearing the heart in ſorrow and heauineſſe, as a pleaſant harmonie, or well tuned dittie, ſung with a ſweete voyce, affecteth the eare.

Verſ. 21. *If thine enemie hunger, giue him bread to eate: if he thirſt, giue him water to drinke.*

Verſ. 22. *For thou ſhalt heape coales of fire vpon his head, and the Lord ſhall reward thee.*

THe holy Ghoſt in this place (as he doth expound himſelfe in the new Teſtament, doth giue a precept for Chriſtian charity to our aduerſaries which hate vs, that we ſhould ouercome their malice with beneficence and well doing: and to this purpoſe preſcribeth a dutie in the former verſe, teaching vs how to deale with him; and ſoliciteth vs thereunto by forcible arguments in the latter. The dutie is, that in caſe *our enemie hunger, we ſhould feede him, &c.* if hee be in any want, according to our abilitie and opportunitie we muſt miniſter vnto him, denying him no helpe or courteſie at his neede: therefore the law requireth the ſame, inſtancing in other offices of loue and humanitie: as, *If thou meete thine enemies oxe, or his aſſe going aſtray, thou ſhalt ſurely bring it backe to him againe: if thou ſeeſt the aſſe of him that hated thee lying vnder his burthen, and wouldeſt thou forbeare to helpe him? thou ſhalt ſurely helpe him.* Rom. 12. 10. Exod. 24. 4. 5.

The arguments are two: the firſt from the end: the ſecond from the effect. The end is that we may reconcile him to vs, if it be poſſible; and winne his loue, by powring *coales of fire on his head*, by heaping vp many benefits vpon him: For it ſeemeth to be a compariſon taken from founders, or caſters of mettall, who by adding too much fuell, and making a great fire, will make the hardeſt iron and ſteele at the laſt to melt, and become liquid: and if there be any mettall of ingenuiety and good nature in ſuch foes: if they be not wholly made of droſſe, they will be pacified, and will not after ſo many & great good turnes continue implacable. Euen that waiward *Saul*,

whoſe heart was very much obdurate with hatred, enuie, and malice againſt *Dauid*, was for the time mollified, when he ſaw that he ſpared his life.

Hauing ſuch an aduantage to ſlay him, and onely cut off a piece of his coate, when he might with as much eaſe haue cut off his head: this kindneſſe of *Dauids* did ſo affect *Saul*, and wrought vpon him, that hee called him his ſonne now, whom before he proclaimed a traytor, and prayed to the Lord to recompence vnto him the goodneſſe which he had ſhewen vnto him, whereas formerly hee deſired nothing but his ruine and deſtruction. All good meanes therefore are to be vſed, to make our enemies to be better minded toward vs, whatſoeuer the ſucceſſe be: let our fire of goodneſſe be as great as we can make it: for that we know not what they may proue, whether leade, or tinne, or braſſe, or ſiluer, or gold, &c. vnto this we are perſwaded by the Prophet, ſaying, *Seeke peace, and follow after it*, purſue it with patience, long ſufferance, forbearance, with paines, charges, and all teſtimonies of our deſire of their good will, and care of their welfare. For now notwithſtanding variance continue betweene vs, yet wee ſhall be freed from the burthen and blame thereof, before God, men, and Angels, and in our own conſciences, & theirs alſo: and this is an excellent armour of defence, and we may be aſſured of protection and ſafetie againſt their malitious and miſchieuous practiſes. The effect of this louing behauiour toward our enemie, is the reward to be expected from God, *the Lord ſhall reward thee*, we ſhall bee no loſers, although our enemies remaine obſtinate, and not able to requite vs: if froward men will not reſpect the mercie or courteſie that hath been ſhewed to them, the faithfull God will reward the obedience that hath been yeelded to him: for the more remiſſe, or inſufficient men be to requite any good ſeruices, the more preſt and ready the Almightie will be to recompence them for it: we haue good ſecuritie for this, the Lord Ieſus hath giuen his word for it: *Loue* (ſaith he) *your enemies; doe good, hoping for nothing againe, and your reward ſhall be great, and ye ſhall be the children of the higheſt: for he is kinde to the vnthankefull and euill.* Luke 6.35.

Verſ. 23.

Verſ. 23. *As the north wind driueth away raine, ſo doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*

AS *the north wind,*] Often, and for the moſt part *driueth away raine:* the Hebrew word ſaith, grieueth, vexeth, or moleſteth raine: for we ſo finde it in the 26. chapter, verſ. 10. the great man moleſteth all: it is a catachreſticall and improper ſpeech: for griefe befalleth not vnſenſible creatures, yet there may be a *Metaphor* in it: for that men will ſhunne the place and companie wherein they are grieued and vexed. The truth of this *Proteſis*, or former part of the ſimilitude wee ſee verified by experience. For it is cõmonly fair weather, though cold, when the wind ſitteth in the north: notwithſtanſtanding that there was a north-weſt wind, which by reaſon of the ſituatiõ of the Mediterranean ſea ingendred raine, & gathered the clouds together, *ſo doth an angry countenance*, the ſlanderous tongue, in like maner a frowning look, which argueth diſlike, and diſcontentment, and is a ſigne of anger, ſilenceth, and expelleth him that with his tongue is giuen to ſlander, and backbite others. For the beſt way to bee rid of tale-bearers, and all other ſinfull men, is, to diſcountenance them: for this will diſcourage them from comming to vs at all, when they ſhall ſee themſelues no better welcome: or if they ſhould come, they would not be in haſt to open their packes of newes, when they perceiue their reports to be no better regarded: and let them ſpeake what they will, and what they can, yet wee ſhall not be annoyed with the infection therof, ſo long as we giue ſo little countenance to their backbiting.

Techolel, formed of *Chol.*

Epheſ. 5. 11.

Verſ. 24. *It is better to dwell in the corner of an houſe top, then with a contentious woman in a wide houſe.* See chap. 21. 9. &c. 19. 13.

25. *As cold waters to a wearie ſoule, ſo is good newes from a farre countrie.*

AS *cold waters,*] When they are drunke, eſpecially in the heate of ſommer in thoſe hot countries, doe greatly re-

freſh and comfort *a wearie ſoule*, the perſon wearied with labour and trauell, and by that meanes alſo waxen drie and thirſtie, *ſo is good newes*, touching his owne eſtate, or friends, or the Church of God, or the publike ſtate wherin he liueth, *from a farre countrey*, and from neere alſo: but principally when a good meſſage commeth from places remote and furtheſt diſtant, it is the more acceptable and welcome, becauſe men cannot heare from them euery day, or often, which cauſeth more doubt and feare, touching the eſtate of matters there: and therefore good newes from thence is alſo the more gratefull, becauſe it hath been long and earneſtly looked for, and deſired: for whatſoeuer the heart doth much deſire, the eare will at any time moſt gladly heare of: if *Iacobs* ſonnes had brought him home as many pieces of gold, as they did graines of corne, they could not haue reioyced his ſpirit ſo much as they did by aſſuring him that *Ioſeph* was aliue in Egypt.

Verſ. 26. *A righteous man falling downe before the wicked, is as a troubled fountaine, and corrupted ſpring.*

A *Righteous man falling downe before the wicked*,] Either conſenting with him in any ſinne, or through cowardize and feare deſiſting from any good and neceſſarie dutie, or doing any thing in his preſence, or which may come to his knowledge, that is ſcandalous or offenſiue: (for all this is meant by falling) *is as a troubled fountaine*, is diſgraced, and defaced, as the cleernes & ſweetnes of the wel is by grauel and other ſuch things when they are ſtirred vp: for euery mans naturall corruptions be as mire in the bottome of a good well; and wicked mens ſeducements to euill, or inſultations ouer them for their faults, are as beaſts feet trampling in good wels, *or a corrnpted ſpring*, whereinto filth, carrion, or poyſon is caſt to infect the ſame: for a godly man ſwaruing and erring from the right way is very obnoxious, and apt to doe hurt by his erroneous ſpeeches, when he vndertaketh to maintaine an errour: his examples, and actions in that which is not warrantable by the word of God, and a good conſcience, ſway very much

much with others to be of his iudgement and practiſe. When the ſubtill Iewes had drawne *Peter* into diſſimulation, *Barnabas* quickly followed, and then many others one after another: and if *Paul* had not ſpeedily addreſſed himſelfe to helpe to cleanſe the fountaine, there would haue been much muddie water drunken in Antioch. Wherefore it is a great diſaduantage for godly men to diſcouer their infirmities in the eyes of Gods enemies. What a blemiſh was it for *Abraham* to bee found equiuocating and diſſembling in a matter of ſuch conſequence, of that Heatheniſh *Pharaoh*? what an vncomfortable caſe was it for *Samſon* to be taken of the Philiſtims in an whore-houſe? if it be wiſhed that the afflictions of Gods people ſhould not be heard of in Gath, it is to bee lamented that their ſinnes ſhould be ſeene there. Gal.2.11.12.13.

Verſe 27. *As it is not good to eate much honey; ſo for men to ſearch their owne glory is no glory.*

AS *it is not good to eate much honey,*] Though honey moderately taken be wholeſome food eo bee eaten, yet to eate too much is not good, leſt thou ſurfeit through the exceſſe thereof, and be driuen to vomit thereby. See the 16. verſe of this chapter.

So for men to ſearch their owne glory,] To ſeeke praiſe, glory, commendation, and preferment to themſelues, *is not glory*, is not profitable nor honorable, but rather baſe and contemptible; yea a diſhoneſt and wicked thing: to enioy any of theſe vpon due cauſe, is a teſtimonie of Gods fauour, and a bleſſing vpon well doing; but ſtudiouſly to affect them, and ambitiouſly to hunt after them, is a note of pride, and apparant teſtimonie of vaine-glory; and the more men labour for them, the more vnworthie they are of them. None of the trees ſo greedily longed after ſoueraigntie, and to bee Prince among the reſt, as did the Bramble: humble men deſire rather to doe that which may deſerue praiſe, then to bee magnified and praiſed: and therefore as ſelfe-liking, and deſire of eſtimation aboundeth

deth, so that vertue of true humility is wanting, yea and faith also is wanting: as our Sauiour saith; *How can ye beleeue that seeke honour one of another, and seeke not the honour that commeth of God.*

Ioh. 5. 44.

Vers. 28. *He that hath no rule ouer his owne spirit, is as a city broken downe, and without walles.*

HE that is not able to gouerne his mind, and to keepe vnder his affections, but letteth the bridle loose thereunto, *is as a city broken downe, and without walles*, being not able to resist any assault, but lieth open to the spoyle, the enemie may come in at his pleasure, sacke it, and burne it, and put all the inhabitants to the sword: in such an estate are they which are ruled by their lusts and passions, being not fenced with the wall of the feare of God: they are exposed to the tentations of Satan, and to the fraud and illusions of wicked men: they are not able to withstand any wicked motion of their owne sinfull hearts, or the rage of their vnrulie tongues; they are taken captiues and become bondslaues to euery noysome and damnable vice, whereunto the procliuitie of their fleshly nature carrieth them: whether it be to railing, or quarrelling, or incontinencie, or couetousnesse, or fraudulent dealing, or lying: euery vile affection and lust, will carrie him headlong with violence into all mischiefe and misery: as wild and fierce horses wanting guidance, oftentimes runne away winh a coach, to the danger of all their liues that sit in it.

CHAP.

CHAPTER. XXVI.

Verſ. 1. *As the ſnow in ſommer, and raine in harueſt are not meete, ſo honours is not comely for a foole.*

AS *ſnow in ſommer, and raine in harueſt,*] As ſnow and raine doe not agree to thoſe ſeaſons, neither did either of them vſe to fal at thoſe times in thoſe countries: for it was a miracle to haue raine in wheat haueſt: *ſo honour is vnſeemely for a foole*, ſo are titles, praiſes, and promotions vnfit for wicked perſons, becauſe they ſhould be the rewards of wiſedome, and vertue. Snow is not agreeable to ſommer, ſeeing through the extreme coldneſſe thereof it hindreth the ripening of the corne; likewiſe raine is not welcome in haruеſt, for as much as through the moyſtneſſe thereof, it hindreth the inning of the fruites of the earth: in like manner, *honour is not meet for a foole*, in this reſpect, that hee is vnworthie of it, reproch and puniſhment is more proper and due vnto him: and in this reſpect, becauſe he is vncapable of it: all the preferments in the world cannot make a ſinfull perſon truly honourable, no more then a gold ring in a ſwines ſnout can make her gorgious and beautifull: they doe no more adorne him in wiſe mens eyes, then a tall mans apparell doth become a little boy: and in this reſpect, becauſe they are hurtfull vnto him, making him proud and high minded, and breeding a dangerous timpanie in his heart, & publiſhing to the world his follie & vilenes, as being thereby ſet on an high ſtage that all his misbehauiour may be gazed at, and looked vpon by euery man: and laſtly in this reſpect, that his honour conferred vpon him, and hee thus lifted vp with honour, or rather the picture of it, is made pernicious and noyſome vnto others, by his inſolencie and fierceneſſe, and manifold abuſes of his authoritie. 1. Sam. 12. 17.

Verſ. 2.

Verſ.2. *As the bird by flying, and the ſwallow by flying doe eſcape: ſo the curſe that is cauſeleſſe ſhall not come.*

AS *the bird by flying,*] As the ſetting of lime-twigs or ſnares, the throwing of ſtones, the ſhooting of arrowes or other ſhot, ſeldome hurt the ſwallowes, or other birds that are on wing, or in their flight: but all ſuch attempts are fruſtrate, and take none effect: ſo the imprecations and maledictions, the accuſations and complaints, the ſlanderous reports and bruites which are directed againſt harmeleſſe men, and without deſert, *ſhall not come*, ſhal take no place to hurt them. Men ſet nets, and prepare grins, and vſe other deuices againſt the poore fowles who haue not wronged thē; but very often they loſe their time & labour: for the birds haue no harme, but ſaue themſelues, and eſcape away by flying, and fly away ſo faſt, as the bird-catchers cunning cannot ouertake them: in like manner it commeth to paſſe, that mouthes that are full of curſes, obloquies, ſtriuing to hurt their betters without cauſe, are defeated of their expectation and deſires: for the goodnes of God which is very ſuccourable, ſerueth for feet and wings to his ſeruants that are wrongfully traduced, which will neuer permit an euill tongue to hurt an innocent and righteous man: For God is as prouident for the name of his people, as as he is for their life and eſtate; and doth as well ward off the pernicious words of foule mouthes, as hee doth the cruell ſtrokes of violent hands. *Eliphaz* promiſed to *Iob*, and all other godly men, ſafety from this danger, ſaying; *Thou ſhalt bee hid from the ſcourge of the tongue; neither ſhalt thou bee afraid of deſtruction when it commeth.* Our Sauiour pronounced his Diſciples bleſſed, and willed them to reioyce, when men ſpeak *all manner of euill againſt him for his name ſake falſly.* *Ieremiah* ſaid, *Though hee neither lent on vſurie, nor borrowed on vſurie, yet euery man curſed him:* yet what was he the worſe? *Simeon* telleth *Marie* that our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhould bee *a ſigne to be ſpoken againſt*, but what was he the worſe? *Iezabel* inueighed bitterly againſt *Eliah*, threatning him, and that with an oath,

Iob 5.21.

Mat.5.11.

Ier.15.10.

oath, that hee ſhould not liue three daies to an end: but what was he the worſe? yet deſerued curſes and threatnings vpon due cauſe are perillous and powerfull, and worke many times the bane and ruine of them that are ſmitten with them, when God in his diſpleaſure ſaith Amen vnto them: the two Captaines with their fifties that were ſent to take *Eliyah*, had this verified vpon them, to their woe: and ſo had the boyes which mocked *Eliſha*; and many others in the ſcriptures. Deut.15.9. 2.King.2.10.

Verſ. 3. *A whip for the horſe, a bridle for the aſſe, and a rod for the fooles backe.*

A *Whip for the horſe,*] To incite him, and make him runne ſwiftly forward in the battell: for the ſpeciall, and almoſt onely vſe of horſes in thoſe parts, and at thoſe times (for ought we reade) was for warre: and in ſtead of ſpurres which are amongſt vs, they carried a whip in their hands: according as horſes imployed in our countries for plough, and cart, and ſuch like ſeruices, will not draw laboriouſly enough, vnleſſe they bee remembred now and then with ſmarting laſhes: *a bridle for the aſſe*, to rule and direct him in his way: for thoſe they vſed in iourneyes to trauell with: this ſimple creature when he carrieth a man on his backe, would goe out of the right way very often, vnleſſe hee were by him guided and ordered by a bit: *and a rod for the fooles backe*, that is, chaſtiſements and corrections appertaine to wicked and witleſſe fooles, and that for two cauſes; the one to ſtirre him vp, if it be poſſible, and prouoke him to goodneſſe; the other to reſtraine him as much as may be, and detaine him from ſin: for the bruit beaſts are not harder to bee gouerned, then wilfull, and vnteachable men are. *Vaine man* (ſaith *Zophar*) *would bee wiſe, though man be borne like a wild aſſe colt.* Maſters and Parents finde this true in their families; and ſo doe Magiſtrates in the Common-wealth, and Miniſters feele it in the Church, and God taketh ſpeciall notice of it. Iob 11.12.

Verſ.4.

Verſe 4. *Anſwere not a foole according to his fooliſhnes, leſt thou be like him.*

ANſwere not a foole in his fooliſhneſſe,] In talke, and ſpeech betweene thee and him, deale not with him according to his ſinfull vaine and manner: if he ſcoffe, fall not thou to ſcurrility: if he raile, fall not thou to reuiling: if he rage, break not thou into paſſion: after whatſoeuer manner hee diſordereth his tongue, imitate him not, conforme not thy ſelfe to his vaine iangling, *leſt thou be like to him*, leſt by following his example, or incurring the opinion of follie, thou corrupt thy heart, abuſe thy tongue, or blemiſh thy eſtimation, as hee doth his: for great circumſpection is to be vſed in dealing with rude men, for obſeruation of time, and place, matter, manner, and meaſure of ſpeaking. *Hezekiah* commanded that no anſwere ſhould be made to railing *Rabſekah*. Saint *Peter* would haue vs in this caſe to follow Chriſt his example, *Who when he was reuiled, reuiled not againe: when hee ſuffered, hee threatned not, but committed it to him that iudgeth righteouſly. And therefore admoniſheth vs not to render euill for euill, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe to bleſſe.*

2. King. 18. 3. 6.

1. Pet. 2. 23. and 3. 9.

Verſ. 5. *Anſwere a foole according to his fooliſhneſſe, leſt he be wiſe in his owne conceit.*

IT ſeemeth to the firſt view that this ſentence is contrarie, and meerely contradictorie to the former, that being heere commanded, which is there forbidden: but vpon further inquirie, wee ſhall finde that they very well accord, without all manner of oppoſition, if it bee obſerued that there are two kinds of anſwering; the one in follie, to faſhion ones ſelfe according to the fooles courſe; the other vnto follie, to let the foole know his abſurditie: *Anſwere a foole according to his follie*, either by reprouing, or confuting him, or ſhewing him the danger of his ſinne; or affrighting his heart with the iudgments of God, *leſt he be wiſe in his owne conceit*, leſt by conceiuing

uing error to be truth, he remaine ignorant: or fantaſying his ſpeech to be excellent, he wax proud: or imagining his neighbour not to be able to replie, he grow the more inſolent. *Micaiah* would not anſwere the Prophets according to their follie: but he did not let them paſſe without an anſwere, and ſuch as was for their perpetuall reproch. *Paul* would not anſwer *Feſtus* according to his folly, when he ſaid hee was *mad*: but he ſoundly refuted him with his ſober and modeſt ſpeeches. *Abigail* did not anſwer *Nabal* according to his fooliſhnes in his drunken mood, whileſt he was raging againſt *Dauid*: but ſhe made him vnderſtand on the morrow, what miſchiefe his follie had like to haue brought vpon himſelfe, and his familie; which killed his heart, and ſtroke him as dead as a ſtone. 1.King.20. Act.26.25. 1.Sam.25.37.

Verſ.6. *He that ſendeth a meſſage by the hand of a foole, cutteth off the feete, and drinketh violence.*

HE *that ſendeth a meſſage by the hand of a foole,*] Which committeth an errand, or any other buſineſſe to *a foole*, to one that wanteth wiſedome, and honeſtie: For by the *hand* of any, is an Hebrew phraſe commonly for parties imployed in matters, is as vnwiſe in that behalfe, *as hee that cutteth off the feete* of the meſſenger whom he ſendeth: meaning that he doth depriue himſelfe of the meanes whereby his purpoſes ſhould be performed. Wiſedome, to manage a mans affaires, is as needfull as legges and feete to carrie one vnto them: and therefore it is all one, in reſpect of the ſucceſſe, to ſend a meſſenger that hath no legges, or hauing ſome, to ſaw them off, and to imploy him that is voide of iudgement, diſcretion, and faithfulnes.

And drinketh violence] Procureth as much ſorrow, and diſcontentment to himſelfe, as if he were violently abuſed, and ſhould be compelled to drink nothing but that which is both vnpleaſant, and vnwholſome, offending his ſtomacke, and oppreſſing of nature. See chap.10.26. in the Doctrine.

Verſ.7.

Verſ.7. *As the legges of the lame are not equall: ſo is a parable in a fooles mouth.*

A Foole is fitly in this verſe reſembled to a lame man: for euery foole halteth downe right in his vnderſtanding, or behauiour, and the words alſo vttered by a fooles mouth are aptly compared to his legges, which are withered, and feeble, vnequall, and vncomely. For indeede all good ſpeeches doe limpe in wicked mens mouthes: as appeareth chap.17.7. they are not ſutable to themſelues: they affirme that now, which they will deny anone, and ſo contrarie. *There is no conſtancie in their mouthes* (ſaith the Prophet) *for within they are very corruption:* ſometimes they bleſſe: ſometimes they curſe: ſometimes prayers are in their lips, ſometimes oathes and imprecations, which S. *Iames* condemneth: ſometimes commending religion, and good men: ſometimes railing at, and inueighing againſt both: ſometimes they haue the words and texts of the Scripture in their mouthes: ſometimes they belch thereout wanton, filthie, and ribaldrie ſpeeches. And as there is no harmonie, or good agreement in their ſpeeches: ſo their moſt plauſible words, and thoſe whereby they make ſome ſemblance of religion, are groſſely thwarted, and croſſed by their actions: *They profeſſe* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *that they know God, but by workes they denie him, and are abominable and diſobedient, and to euery good worke reprobate.* And the Prophet *Iſaiah* teacheth that their hearts neuer keepe pace with their tongues, whileſt their tongues are talking of any thing which is good: alway when the one commeth one way, the other goeth another.

Iam.3.10.

Tit.1.16.

Iſai.29.13.

Verſ.8. *As he that hideth a ſtone in a ſling: ſo is he that giueth honour to a foole.*

AS hee *that hideth a ſtone in a ſling*, or engines whereout they were wont to ſhoote great ſtones, for the battering of walles or cities: as if hee ſhould ſay, In like manner as hee which

which doth bring ſhot for ordinance, which by the diſcharge thereof, will doe much miſchiefe; or doth furniſh a brainſick, or madheaded fellow with weapons, doth indanger many, and is the cauſe of all the hurt that ſhall be done by that ſtone, bullet, or other mortall weapons, which he hath ſo vnaduiſedly deliuered out of his owne hand, into the hand of ſuch a mad or malitious fellow: ſo doth he which *giueth honour to a foole*, that promoteth to office ſuch as are worthleſſe, and altogether vnfit for the ſame, is after a ſort acceſſarie to al the harmes which they doe: For as their wils and purpoſes are corrupt, and naught, ſo hath he been a meanes to helpe them to power to accompliſh the ſame: this his act hath drawne his hand to the defence of euill cauſes, to the receiuing of bribes, to the peruerting of iuſtice: to the diſcountenancing of good, to the incouraging of the wicked, and to all the villanies which they ſhall commit. *Saul* put a ſtone into the ſling, when hee put that curriſh *Doeg* into office, and accordingly gaue countenance vnto him: and ſo did *Aſhueroſh* when hee aduanced *Haman* that curſed Amalekite.

Verſ. 9. *As a thorne going vp into the hand of a drunkard: ſo is a parable in a fooles mouth.*

THe wicked foole may very fitly be compared to a drunkard: for as a drunkard for a time wanteth the vſe of reaſon; ſo is he commonly void of grace, and good diſcretion: a parable, or wiſe ſaying, in ſuch a fooles mouth, may alſo be very well likened to *a thorne going vp into the hand of a drunkard*, hee both hurteth himſelfe therewith, or pricketh thoſe that are about him: ſo doth this vaine and impious foole, the beſt ſentences which hee vttereth: For when wicked men vſe good words, they commonly tend to ſome miſchiefe: as did *Caiphas* by his propheeying perſwade to put Chriſt to death: Ioh. 11. 49. ſo S. *Peter* accuſeth the prophane hypocrites of his time, for 2. Pet. 3. 16. *wreſting Pauls Epiſtles to their owne deſtruction.*

Vers.10. *The great man moleſteth all, and hireth the foole, and the tranſgreſſor.*

THe great man] Which hath power, and dignitie, and no goodneſſe, *moleſteth all*, oppreſſeth, and vexeth all his vnderlings, cauſing them to groane vnder the burthens which he laieth vpon them: and to the ſame end, and the better to bring his purpoſes to paſſe, *he hireth the foole, and the tranſgreſſor*, giueth entertainment, wages, countenance, and offices to the worſt ſort of men, to haue them his agents for information, for counſell, for proiects, for execution of all their deteſtable deſignements: ſo did *Abimelech* for the bloudy maſſacring of his innocent brethren: ſo did *Iezabel* for the taking away of the life of *Naboth:* ſo did the corrupt gouernours in Iudea before *Ieremiah:* ſo did thoſe rauenous oppreſſors in the time of *Zephanie*. And how could *Saul*, after he became a perſecutor of *Dauid* and good men, haue miſſed his Bailiefe *Doeg?*

Iudg.9.4.
1.King.20.10.
Nehem.8.15.
Zeph.10.9.

Verſ.11. *As a dogge returneth to his vomite: So a foole returneth to his follie.*

SOme ſinners are like to dogs in barking: ſome in biting: ſome in properties; but a backſlider is like vnto them in their moſt beaſtly qualitie, euen in taking vp their vomite: For the dogge feeling his ſtomacke ſurcharged goeth to the graſſe, and caſteth vp that which troubleth him: but afterwards delighted with filthie things, returneth, and taketh vp that as good, which before hee had caſt out as euill, and ſo like a filthie beaſt as hee is feedeth himſelfe with his owne filthineſſe. After the ſame manner the reuolter feeling his conſcience burthened with ſinne, by the knowledge of the good word of God, though not with the conſcience of it, and being moued therewith, laieth aſide his iniquitie for a time: but being ſet vpon afreſh by his owne concupiſcence, and taking pleaſure in that which is vile and loathſome, returneth backe to his old euill courſe, and is againe intangled with his firſt vncleannes,

vncleannes, which to doe is a moſt grieuous, dangerous, and deadly tranſgreſſion: for all the firſt ſinnes of ſuch a man remaine ſtill vpon the ſcore, becauſe howſoeuer there were ſhewes of repentance in him, yet there was nothing indeed but guile and hypocriſie: and it is to bee found by all experience, that he groweth worſe and worſe, and that his latter end is much more wretched then his beginning. Apoſtaters are of all other men the moſt dangerous and hurtfull perſons to Gods people. *Achitophel*, *Ioaſh*, and *Iudas*, are noted to be trecherous and moſt notorious malefactors. The diuel hath more power ouer them, their owne guiltineſſe doth gnaw their conſcience, and much imbitter them: they are leſſe carefull of repentance, when they trample on the medicine that ſhould heale them, and at laſt the iudgements of God will fall moſt heauily vpon them. Mat. 12. 45.

Verſ. 12. *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his owne conceit? there is more hope of a foole then of him.*

SEeſt thou,] Doſt thou know by familiar acquaintance, or conuerſation, or by any teſtimonies, *a man wiſe in his owne conceit?* that is opinionate of his owne wiſedome, and his carnall mind is lifted vp with conceit of his owne vnderſtanding, as one looking in a glaſſe, ſhould dote vpon his owne perſonage or beautie, *there is more hope of a foole*, there is greater likelihood that an idiot, or naturall, may be brought to learne, practiſe, or receiue good, then this glorious ſelfe-liker: for the inſufficiencie of the one groweth from want of naturall capacity; of the other from pride, ſinfulneſſe, and abuſe of wit: God correcteth the one indeed with a ſharp rod, and yet there is hope of his pitie and compaſſion toward him: for his commiſeration is moſt in greateſt miſerie: but hee plagueth the other moſt grieuouſly in wrath, being prouoked thereto by his due deſerts. Wherefore of all fooles conceited fooles are the moſt lamentable; as Chriſt ſaid to the Phariſees, *If yee were blind, ye ſhould haue no ſinne, but now ye ſay, we ſee, therefore your ſinne remaineth.* For what are their guides, but blindneſſe of Ioh. 9. 41.

mind, hardneſſe of heart, pride, luſt, and Satan? and what ſinne almoſt are they freed from him? are they not impudent? are they not deſpiſers of all good inſtructions? are they not contemners of God and his ordinances? *As were alſo the Phariſees and Lawyers, who reiected the counſell of God againſt themſelues, and would not bee baptized of Iohn?* And what iudgements may they not looke for? when woe is denounced againſt them by name; when God is their enemie, when damnation is their portion.

Luk.7.30.

Iſa.5.21.

Verſ.13. *A ſlothfull man ſaith, there is a Lion in the way, a Lion in the ſtreets.* See chap.22.13.

14. *As the doore turneth on the hinges: ſo doth the ſluggard on his bed.*

AS *the doore,*] Or gate of an houſe, *turneth on his hinges,* and hookes whereupon it is ſet, and yet is not carried out of it place, but there hangeth ſtill; though ſometimes it be moued to one ſide, and ſometimes to another: euen ſo the ſluggard faſtened to his bed, ſometimes rolleth to this ſide, and ſometimes to that, often purpoſing to riſe, but ſtill lying ſtill and taking his eaſe, he would neuer fall off thoſe hookes, vnleſſe hee were lifted off, or by compulſion knocked off: if the authority of ſuperiours, or hunger, or meere neceſſity did not rouze him vp, he would gall his ſide with beating vpon the ſheets, and weary himſelfe with toſſing vp and downe, before he would riſe. Such an iron ſtrength hath the ſinne of ſluggiſhneſſe, to hold men faſt when they are ſet vpon it.

Some other kind of ſluggards are as faſt tied to other vices: ſome are in thraldome to their bellies for tipling, and good cheere: ſome to their games and ſports: ſome to this pleaſure, and ſome to that; though they riſe ſooner then the other, yet they are no better occupied then if they were in their beds: but worſe a great deale many of them; and yet are ſo in the power of their ſinne, that nothing can draw them out of the ſame, but onely the vertue of Gods ſpirit, if euer it bee beſtowed vpon them.

Verſ.15.

Verſ. 15. *The ſlothfull man hideth his hand in his boſome, and it grieueth him to bring it to his mouth.* See chap. 19.24.

16. *The ſluggard is wiſer in his owne eyes, then ſeuen men that can render a reaſon.*

THe *ſluggard is wiſer in his owne eyes,*] As he himſelfe thinketh of himſelfe, hee hath that imagination in his owne mind, and is not ſo indeed, *then ſeuen men,* then many others, *that can render a reaſon,* of the things they doe or ſpeake: and it may as well be tranſlated tending to the ſame purpoſe, that *returneth ſage counſell,* that giue prudent anſweres to thoſe that aske their aduice, and can ſufficiently confirme and iuſtifie all that they ſay: for idleneſſe maketh men very proud, notwithſtanding that their braines thereby bee much dulled: their vnteachableneſſe conuinceth them of this; for they will learne of no man, their contempt doth alſo manifeſtly argue it: for they will cenſure euery man. It was ſaid concerning Sodome, that this was her iniquitie, *Pride, fulneſſe of bread, and abundance of idleneſſe was in her, and in her daughters.* On the contrarie ſide, faithfull diligence in a good calling, by Gods bleſſing, is a meanes of great humility. *Meſhibei tagnam.* Ezech. 16.49.

Verſe 17. *Hee that paſſing by medleth with ſtrife that belongeth not to him; is as he that taketh a dog by the eares.*

HE *that paſſing by,*] Occaſionally where men contend, and hath no calling to the place, eſpecially to the buſineſſe, and *medleth with the ſtrife that belongeth not vnto him,* is angry, and beginneth to chide and brawle for another mans cauſe, or interpoſeth himſelfe into matters wherein hee is not intereſted, *is as he that taketh a dog by the eares,* and thereby prouoketh the dog to take him by the hand, or by the throat: for he putteth himſelfe in danger of his teeth; and ſo buſie bodie agents in other mens quarrels, doe many waies indanger themſelues, thruſting themſelues into troubles, and into ſuites, and incenſing many to bee their enemies, with whom otherwiſe

wise they might haue liued peaceably: for they that enter strife without calling, do commonly hazzard themselues into trouble without comfort: as *Iehoshaphat*, hauing taken part with *Achab*, had felt to his woe, but that the Lord was very mercifull to him; but wee must vnderstand that *Salomon* doth not taxe such as doe labour to accord those that are at debate: but which maketh himselfe a partie, and maintaineth one side against another, which commeth not with water to extinguish the flame of discord, but with fuell and bellowes to feed the fire, blow the coales, and encrease the heate of variance betweene them.

Vers. 18. *As a mad man that casteth firebrands, arrowes, and death.*

19. *So is he that deceiueth his neighbour, and saith, Am I not in sport?*

AS *a mad man,*] Which is depriued of the vse of his vnderstanding, and is carried with rage and furie, *casteth* abroad, and at other men, *firebrands, arrowes, and death,* all manner of things which come to his hand, that may doe hurt to others, euen to the losse of their liues: for furious persons haue a great longing to shead blood, and to kill: *so is hee that deceiueth his neighbour,* the cogging iester, or sporting companion, doth those deeds, or vttereth those words that pierce his neighbour or friends vnto the heart: but he couereth himselfe so vnder the pretence of mirth and pastime, that if he bee called into question for it, his answere is, I did it, or spake it but in iest. And thus the mirth of wicked men is vsually mixed with mischiefe. It was a matter of sport to *Abner*, to see men draw their weapons to sheadding of one anothers blood: *Let* 2.Sam.2.14.15 *the young men* (saith he to *Ioab*) *arise and play before vs, and they caught euery one his fellow by the beard, and thrust his sword into his side:* the good fellowship of many of them is little better then horse play: they strike at one anothers credit as much as they can, and studie to make them be derided as much as they may: and so they doe for their bodies, though quaffing,

fing, and anſwering of healths would deſtroy health, and extinguiſh life, yet they hold them vnto it, they muſt doe them their right: and ſo they doe to their eſtates: though the loſſe of their money were the ouerthrow of their families, yet it is no diſcourteſie to draw them into companie, where they may hazzard all, and who will be more willing to winne it then themſelues?

Verſ. 20. *Without wood the fire is quenched, and without a tale-bearer ſtrife ceaſeth.*

EVen as fire is maintained by wood, coales, or ſuch like matter: ſo is commonly contention and ſtriſe nouriſhed by an euill tongue: wherefore as without *wood the fire* goeth out, ſo (ſaith this text) where there is no whiſper, *will ſtrife ceaſe:* For contention is a fire, backbiters are fuellers, which take it for their office, and worke to expell and keep away brotherly loue from among men: ſuch Incendiaries they are, that if it were in their power, would ſet the whole world on fire, and doe preuaile. For *the tongue* (ſaith S. *Iames*) *is a fire, and a world of iniquitie, it ſetteth on fire the whole courſe of nature.* Iam. 3. 6. See chap. 16. verſ. 28. both in the text, and doctrine.

Verſe 21. *As coales to burning coales, and wood to fire: ſo is a contentious man to kindle ſtrife.*

AS the former ſentence declared the meanes whereby ſtriſe may be appeaſed, and that is the remouall of whiſperers, make-bates, back-biters, and tell-tales: So this ſheweth the ſpring from whence contention floweth, whereby alſo it is increaſed, and groweth greater and greater, and that is the contentious perſon. For as coales being put to coales on the fire, and new wood added to that which was there before, augmenteth the heate, and maketh the flame greater: ſo the wrathfull quarrelſome perſon, maketh him to bee furious which was before but a little moued with anger, and a little quarrell to grow to a great broyle: for one ſinfull man is apt

to corrupt many. *Corah, Dathan* and *Abiram* being but a few, (and one of them alſo at the firſt ſet on the other) did draw more then a few into the conſpiracie againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*. We reade nothing worth noting in *Sheba*, but onely that he was factious, longing for turbulencie and combuſtion; and yet that baſe wretch could worke vpon a multitude, to cauſe them to caſt off their Soueraigne. It appeareth that traiterous *Iudas* did onely mutter himſelfe againſt the honour that was done to Chriſt, by the oyle powred on his head: but that hee had alſo kindled the reſt of the Diſciples to ioyne with him therein.

Verſe 22. *The words of a tale-bearer are as ſtrokes, and goe downe into the innermoſt parts of the belly.* See chap. 18.8.

Verſ. 23. *As a potſheard couered ouer with ſiluer droſſe: ſo are burning lips, and a wicked heart.*

AS *a potſheard couered ouer with ſiluer*, is but a baſe and contemptible piece of earth: For of what value is a potſheard? or what excellencie is in droſſe, though perhaps the vnwiſe man be deceiued with the ſhew thereof: for all is not gold ẏ gliſtereth: *ſo are burning lips*, fauning lips, hot, and great words of loue and friendſhip, *and a wicked heart*, a heart that mindeth nothing leſſe, thē that which the ſpeeches make ſhew of: an heart that nouriſheth enmitie, while the tongue pretendeth great good wil & liking. So that hypocritical diſſemblers be naught on both ſides; for that which is beſt in them, their very guilding, is but imaginarie: that which ſeemeth ſuch pretious mettall in many mens eyes, will proue plaine droſſe, if it be brought to the touchſtone: as that which they thinke is putrified and corrupt, ſo is that which they doe, and ſo is all that they ſay. The ſepulchers of dead men, though they containe rottennes and filthineſſe within; yet may haue coſtly matter without, as Marble, Iet, or richer ſtones: but theſe diſſembling mates haue but painted painting vpon them, their very colours are counterfeit.

Verſ. 24.

Verſ.24. *He that hateth diſſembleth with his lips, and laieth vp deceit within him.*

Verſ.25. *When hee ſpeaketh faire beleeue him not: for ſeuen abominations are in his heart.*

IN theſe two verſes, and the two next following, hee liuely deſcribeth a malitious caitife, who is his crafts maſter in practiſing of miſchiefe. Firſt hee doth declare his fraudulencie and guile, in theſe two verſes: and ſecondly doth foretell the croſſe, and vnſucceſſull euent thereof, in the two next. Touching his guile, hee ſheweth what he doth pretend, and likewiſe diſcouereth what he doth intend: His pretence is kindneſſe and amitie, *he diſſembleth with his lips*, and faineth himſelfe to be another manner of man then that hee is: and of ſuch the Prophet ſpeaketh, ſaying, *They ſpeake vanitie one to another, flattering with their lips, and ſpeake with a double heart.* Pſal. 12.3. Hee doth not only imagine euill, but waiteth his time and opportunitie to performe it. See examples hereof in *Kain*, *Ioab*, and *Iudas*. *When he ſpeaketh faire*, when he moſt courteouſly ſaluteth thee: when he proteſteth what great account he maketh of thee: when hee promiſeth fauours, and the beſt offices hee can performe vnto thee, *beleeue him not*, be not confident of him, truſt him not too farre, come not into his danger, expoſe not thy ſelfe into his hands: For it is not the want of charitie, but the vſe of wiſedome, to be warie of an aduerſarie, eſpecially which maligneth thee for thy goodneſſe: For if he perſiſt in his euill, and be not conuerted vnto God, he cannot ſoundly be reconciled to thee, and his glozing ſpeeches be no teſtimonies of his good meaning: but ginnes and traps whereby he may catch thee more eaſily at aduantage, and effect his owne purpoſe. If *Abel* had knowne *Kaines* minde when hee ſpake to him to walke in the fields, he would haue been better aduiſed before he would haue gone out: *For there are ſeuen abominations*, a great number of villanous thoughts and purpoſes *in his heart*, in his minde, and that alſo with the conſent Iere.12.6. Micah.7.5.

of

of his will and affections: he is plotting ſome miſchieuous attempts, and greatly deſireth the effecting of them.

Verſ.26. *Hatred may be couered by deceit: but the wickednes thereof ſhall be ſhewen to the whole congregation.*

HEre he beginneth to ſhew the euill ſpeed of the diſſembler in his malitious and guileſull behauiour, and that is the detection of his venomous hart, and of that poyſon which he hath ſo artificially couered, *but the wickednes of his hatred ſhall be ſhewen to the whole congregation*, the world ſhall ſee to his ignominy and reproch, what a malignant minde hee hath borne, and what a craftie hypocrite he hath been: For they that nouriſh any ſinne in their ſoules, may looke to haue it breake out at laſt to their ſhame. One occaſion or other will winde them into lewd practiſes, as traiterous *Achitophel* had a baite laid for him, by Gods prouidence, in *Abſaloms* conſpiracie: And ſo had treacherous *Ziba* alſo: and Gods iudgement will bring ſinne to light, either while the ſinner liueth, or after he is dead: either amongſt men in this world, or before Chriſt at the iudgement ſeate of God.

Verſ.27. *Who ſo diggeth a pit ſhall fall therein: and hee that rolleth a ſtone, it ſhall returne vpon him.*

ANother, and more grieuous plague that ſhall light vpon the politike and craftie enemies of Gods people, is the woe that they worke to themſelues, all that they haue been deuiſing againſt others, returneth vpon their owne heads: *He that diggeth a pit*, to take his innocent and godly brother in, is as if he were a wilde and hurtfull beaſt: (for the ſimilitude is taken from hunters) *ſhall fall therein*, through Gods iuſt iudgement ſhall be taken in the ſame ſnare: *He that rolleth a ſtone*, or caſteth it vp to the end it might fall vpon his neighbours head, *it ſhall returne vpon him*, it ſhall deſcend with violence vpon his owne pate: For they that goe about iniuriouſly

rioufly to hurt others that feare God, do moſt harme to themſelues: they bring moleſtation to their brethren at the firſt; they trouble others with the ſmoake, and burne vp themſelues with the flame. Who is ignorant of examples which make this manifeſt? *Dauids* enemies; *Daniels* enemies; *Haman*, and many ſuch others, haue their names ſtill hanging on the gibbet: one canot trauell in Scriptures, but hee ſhall ſee how, and for what cauſe ſuch a fearfull execution was done vpon them. Pſal. 7. 15. Eccleſ. 10. 8.

Verſ. 28. *The deceitfull tongue hateth him whom it goeth about to afflict, and worketh ruine by a flattering mouth.*

THe deceitfull tongue,] The man that vſeth his tongue to falſhood and deceit, *hateth him whom it goeth about to afflict*, and ſo intendeth to afflict or plague him whom he hateth: for when men are determined to doe any miſchiefe, their tongues muſt act and manage their buſineſſe: for ſo much the Prophet teſtifieth of them, and euery one of them, ſaying, *The words of his mouth are iniquitie and deceit, he hath left off to bee wiſe, and to do good: He deuiſeth miſchiefe vpon his bed: he ſetteth himſelfe on a way that is not good, hee abhorreth not euill.* Pſal. 63. All conſultations, and parlies for the concluding of matters, are dealt in by the tongue. The tongue accuſeth and traduceth innocents to ſuperiours, and Magiſtrates, to the end they being incenſed, they may puniſh as they haue a quarel againſt: great complaints were made of *Ieremiah* to the Princes and rulers: and of Chriſt to *Pontius Pilate*, & of *Paul* to *Felix* and *Feſtus*. The tongue muſt remoue away the blame of ſpleene, hard dealings, cruelty, that there may ſeeme to be ſome colour of iuſtice on their part, & deſert on the others, *and worketh ruine*, oppreſſeth many righteous and harmeleſſe men, *by a flattering mouth*, partly by faire ſpeeches, to him whom hee leueleth at, and purpoſeth to ſtrike to the hart, that he may the leſſe miſtruſt him, and partly by fawning on others that may aſſiſt him, or ſerue his turne, whom thereby he getteth to bee on his ſide, and exaſperateth againſt his aduerſarie, or to whom he is an aduerſarie.

CHAP.

CHAPTER. XXVII.

Vers. 1. *Boast not thy selfe of to morrow: for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*

BOast not thy selfe,] Presume not too farre of any thing that thou wilt doe, haue, or enioy, *of to morrow*, of the time to come, how farre off, or neere soeuer: for it is the phrase of the Scripture to call that which is future, and to come, by the name of *to morrow*; *When thy sonne shall aske thee to morrow, saying, What is this?* Therefore no man ought to be confident of that which shall be hereafter. *Dauid* acknowledgeth himselfe to be too bold, and that therfore he was worthely corrected for it, when he bragged in this maner, *I said in my prosperity I shall neuer be moued*: the reason why thou shouldest not thus boast, is from the vncertainty of all future euents: because *thou knowest not what a day may bring foorth*, what things may fall out this day to preuent all thine expectation to morrow, or what may come to passe to morrow, cleane contrary to that which thou didst expect this day. The day is said to bring forth by a comparison taken from women with child, or creatures great with yong: because time trauelleth with the Lords decrees, and in their season bringeth forth the same, euen as a woman doth her babe, or little infant, and what shall bee borne at any time, none in the world doth know: euery day, and euery night, and euery houre, and euery moment is bringing forth such a birth, as all the world is ignorant of: because Gods purposes are knowne to himselfe, and concealed from his creatures: the accidents, and occurrents of this life, are so hidden from men, that they cannot conclude vpon warrant and certainty what shall be anone, who knoweth whether his life will last till anone: little dreamed *Haman* that purposed to be so merrie at the Queenes feast, that hee should be hanged before

Exod. 13. 14.

before his dinner time was past. Therefore S. *Iames* taxeth those who are so large in promises, for their owne good speed and commoditie in their traffique, and merchandise: saying, *Goe to now yee that say, to day, or to morrow, wee will goe into such a citie or country, and continue there a yeere, and buy, and sell, and get gaine. Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: For what is your life, it is a shadow, &c.*

Vers. 2. *Let another man praise thee, and not thine owne mouth; a stranger, and not thine owne lips.*

LEt *another man praise thee,*] So behaue thy selfe, and order thine affaires, as that thou maiest giue cause to another to praise thee, though that bee not the end which thou aimest at, nor the purpose of thy well doing, *and not thine owne mouth*, thou thy selfe with thine owne mouth, *a stranger*, any other besides thy selfe, *and not thine owne lips*, namely, the words which thy lips doe vtter: for it is a very vnseemly thing for a man to applaud his owne doing, if the seeking of praise from other be condemnable, and worthily condemned of our Sauiour in the Pharisees: much more absurd it is to giue commendations of himselfe vauntingly, to found out his owne praises because his testimonie may worthily bee suspected of falshood, because the worst men be most forward in praising their owne deserts; and this corrupteth and staineth the goodnesse of the worke, that no praise is due for it either from God, or from men, for he that praiseth himselfe is not allowed, but whom the Lord praiseth: or if any thing bee wrought that is praise worthie, to whom doth the glory of it belong but to God, who is the proper author of it, and man but the instrument of it, by his direction and power? Finally, it is needlesse for men to magnifie themselues, if they bee faithfull: for God will bring their righteousnesse to light, and men wil yeeld vnto them the honour of their vertues, though they hold their peace: nevertheless it is necessarie for a man in some cases to testifie his graces and actions: as in defence of his innocencie, when he is vniustly traduced, as *Paul* was: or when the hiding 2. Cor. 10. 8.

or

or concealing of ones goodneſſe, may turne to the hinderance of the truth, or to the hurt of the Church, or impairing of Gods glory.

Verſ. 3. *A ſtone is heauie, and ſand waighty: but a fooles wrath is heauier then they both.*

A *Stone is heauie,* For that it is a lumpe of congealed earth, *and ſand weightie,* eſpecially by reaſon of the moiſture that is in it: *but a fooles wrath,* the rage & diſpleaſure of a foole, of a wicked man, whoſe hart and paſſions are not gouerned by the vſe of reaſon, or the ſpirit of God, *is heauier then they both,* is more burthenous and importable, then either an heauie ſtone, or weighty ſand to them on whom it lighteth, or lieth: it preſſeth them vnder, and cruſheth them ſorer, either with preſent violence, or future reuenge; either the hand ſtriketh, or the tongue ſtriketh, or the heart deuiſeth what direfull hurt he may doe; eſpecially if hee haue power whereby hee may wreake his malice and anger. Such an heauie burthen doe they beare that lie vnder, and are ſubiect to the yoake of malicious, wrathfull, and violent perſons: they haue three cruell taskmaſters dwelling together in one houſe, and conſpiring together with one conſent: and they are a fierce nature, proud mind, and the cruell diuell: all theſe ioyned together, doe kindle anger, doe encreaſe it to exceſſe, and make it difficult, and hardly extinguiſhed. The bricke vpon the poore Hebrewes ſhoulders was very waighty, and burthenous; but the hard hearts, and tyrannous dealing of their maſters the Egyptians, were far more then they.

Verſ. 4. *Wrath is cruell, and anger outragious: but who can ſtand before enuie?*

AS in the former ſentence he aggrauated the violent force of anger and wrath, by making it more burthenous then ſtones, or ſand. In this hee aggrauateth the damnable venome of enuie, by making it more pernicious then anger and wrath:

Wrath

Wrath is cruell, it ſeldome leaueth off, or is ſatisfied, till it committeth cruelty: witneſſe the inhumane act of *Simeon* and *Leui*: *and anger is outragious*, like the waters of a riuer paſſing ouer the bankes: or like to a ſpring tide which ouerfloweth all the low grounds and marſhes round about: (for the Hebrew word ſignifieth inundating, or ouerflowing:) ſuch a flood proceeded from the wrath of *Herod*, who (for that hee ſaw himſelfe *to be mocked of the Wiſe men*) commanded all the infants in Beth-leem, and the bordering quarters round about to be ſlaine: *but who can ſtand before enuie?* what good man can preſerue himſelfe from being enuied? or were not God a maruellous protector of his, how could any poſſibly auoide the hurtfull ſtrokes of enuious perſons, but that he ſhall be caſt downe, and ouerthrowne by them? So that this deteſtable vice of cankred enuie, is farre more dangerous and condemnable, then the ſinne of crabbed anger, and wrathfulneſſe, becauſe it is of longer continuance, and ſtill growing; wheras the other is ſhorter, and more and more abating: and it is more cunning, ſecret, and cloſe, & therfore alſo muſt needs be more perilous: for that men cannot ſo eaſily defend themſelues from the enemies, or weapons which will not be ſeene, before they be felt. Many times anger is for faults, and things done amiſſe, or at the leaſt they ſeeme ſuch to him, that is moued at them: but enuie is vſually for goodneſſe, and againſt good men; and therefore alwaies the beſt haue been moſt enuied; as *Abel*, *Ioſeph*, *Dauid*, *Daniel*, and Chriſt Ieſus: anger may bee pacified by entreatie, by apologie of ones owne innocencie and ſubmiſſion; by mediation of friends; by commendation, or teſtimonie giuen of the partie fallen into diſpleaſure: but all theſe meanes are oyle to feed the flame, and not water to quench the heate of enuie: for when God himſelfe pleaded for *Abel*, *Cain* was the more imbittered againſt him. *Sheteph.*

Verſ. 5. *Open rebuke is better than ſecret loue.*

OPen rebuke,] A check, or admonition giuen vnto them for a fault committed, *is better then ſecret loue*, doth more

more good, and is more to be esteemed of then the hidden affection of loue in the hart, which is not manifested by word or deed, nor sheweth it selfe when neede requireth: for they are
Leuit.19.17. our best friends that deale most against our sinnes and corruptions; for hereby they shall shew themselues to bee no flatterers, but faithfully minded toward vs; they doe vs the best fauour, and performe the greatest kindnesse that may bee in reconciling vs to our best friend; namely, to the Lord, whom by our offences wee had incensed against vs: they succour vs against our most dangerous aduersaries, namely, our transgressions, and Satan, into whose hands wee had cast our selues: they helpe vs where our owne power faileth: they giue direction to vs when we had lost our way: they giue vs medicines to cure our deadly diseases.

Vers. 6. *The wounds of a friend are faithfull: but the kisses of an enemie are to be prayed against.*

THe opposition standeth thus: *The wounds of a friend are faithfull*, and therefore to be prayed for, *but the kisses of an enemie are* deceitfull, and therefore to be *prayed against.*

The wounds of a friend,] The sharpe and piercing chastisements; whether by words, or stripes inflicted by a friend, which seeth our need, and in loue or compassion applieth himselfe to say, or doe that which is good for vs; though it be tedious for him to performe, and vneasie for vs to suffer, *are faithfull*, proceed from the fidelity and vprightnesse of his heart towards vs, and from a true desire of our good and welfare: *but the kisses of an enemie*, the faire and flattering countenances of one that hateth a man: (for in the word kisses, hee alludeth to the manner vsed in those countries, where they did salute one another, as well men as women with kisses, & whereby they did professe their kind affection each to other, although they conuersed together, and did not meet after long absence:) for *Iudas* supt with our Sauiour in the night that hee was betrayed, and had been in his companie before, and yet kissed him not very many houres after: *are to be prayed against*,

to

to be taken heede of for our better defence; becauſe wee are not acquainted with mens guilefull purpoſes, we are to intreat the Lord to ſhield vs therefrom: For they deale dangerouſly when they deale moſt ſmoothly: the ſtill waters are commonly the deepeſt. *Dauid* intreateth the Lord that he may not be caught *with the dainties of the wicked: but that he may be ſmitten by the mouth of the righteous. Ioabs, Iudaſes* & *Achitophels* examples are notorious for the confirmation of this point: and the diuell killeth a thouſand more by the call, glaſſe, and baite of delightfull allurements, whereby hee pretendeth to gratifie men, and to ſatisfie their deſires; then by his ſhot of terrors and feares, and by his roring aſſaults.

Verſ. 7. *A perſon that is full loatheth an hony combe: but to him that is hungrie euery bitter thing is ſweete.*

THis ſentence is true both for corporall foode, and ſpirituall, for the things which concerne the ſoule and body: *he that is full* of meate or drinke, doth lothe all dainties whatſoeuer: there is nothing ſo delicious, but if a man be ſated, or haue his ſtomack cloyed therewith, it will be nauſye, and offenſiue vnto him: *the hony combe* doth much affect mens taſte, and is pleaſant almoſt to all mens palates: and yet ſuch as haue ouer charged their ſtomackes, or haue loſt their appetite, would rather trample it vnder their feete, (as the word which we tranſlate (*loathe*) doth ſignifie) then to eate it: and the ſame falleth out in all other delights and refreſhings; thoſe which are very acceptable to ſome, are as diſtaſtfull, and ill liked of others. This ſaying is alſo verified in many, yea in the greater number of people, whoſe ſtomackes ſtand againſt the ſweeteſt hony of Gods holy word: as the Iſraelites in the wilderneſſe loathed that ſacramentall bread of Manna, which the Scriptures calleth Angels food, and was after a miraculous manner beſtowed vpon them: *but to him that is hungrie*, which is pinched with penurie and want, or which hath a greedie appetite to his meate, *euery bitter thing is ſweete*, he feedeth vpon, and ſauourly reliſheth thoſe things which others could not

brooke; nor at other times peraduenture himſelfe could not ſo well away with: but the prouerbe is true, that hunger is the beſt ſauce. The purpoſe of the words is to declare, that men doe eſteeme of things according as their deſires and delights be diſpoſed. Gods ſeruants haue profeſſed that his law and ordinances were *ſweeter to him then hony*, and more pretious then gold: and complaint is made of the wicked that his word
Iere.6.10. was a *reproch to them*, they could not endure it. The auſtere and more ſtrict miniſterie of *Iohn* the Baptiſt was very grateſull and acceptable to ſome, both of the people, ſouldiers, and publicanes; when as the moſt amiable and ioyfull meſſage of the Goſpel, publiſhed by the ſonne of God himſelf, was harſh, and vnwelcome to others, eſpecially the Scribes and Phariſies, which had an high opinion of their owne good eſtate and ſufficiencie.

Verſ.8. *As a bird that wandreth from her neſt: ſo is he that wandreth from his place.*

AS *a bird that wandreth from her neſt*,] That leaueth her neſt wherein her egges, and young ones are, to flie vp and downe, ſhould deale both vnnaturally, and contrary to her kinde, if ſhe ſhould vſe it: For her egges would be addle, and her young ones would be ſtarued, either with cold, or famine, and ſo alſo bring much perill vpon her ſelfe, and her own life, as to be killed with ſtone, or piece, or to be made a prey to the Haulke, or other rauenous fowle: ſo euill prouideth hee for himſelfe, *that wandreth from his owne place*, which ſtragleth abroad vpon no due or iuſt occaſion.

True it is that the bird may flie from her neſt, ſometimes for to ſeeke foode, and meate; but neither too often, nor be too long abſent: and ſo it is lawfull for a man to goe to worke to places remote from his owne houſe, for maintenance to himſelfe and his familie: for hee that doth his office and dutie, whither ſoeuer he goeth, cannot be ſaid to wander from his place, but keepeth reſidence there as he ought. So that remiſſes in mens vocations, and careleſnes of their charge, and of

ſuch as depend vpon them, is ſeldome found in the vnreaſonable creatures, or whē it happeneth, euen in them it is blameworthie: as wee ſee in this text: and haue it alſo in other places confirmed vnto vs, by the teſtimonie of Gods own mouth perſonally talking with *Iob*, who ſaith, *Gaueſt thou the goodly wings to the Peacocke, or wings and feathers to the Oſtrich: which leaueth her egges in the earth, and warmeth them in the duſt, and forgetteth that the foote may cruſh them, and the wilde beaſt breake them: ſhe is hardned againſt her young ones, as if they were not hers: her labour is in vaine without feare, becauſe God hath depriued her of wiſedome, neither hath he imparted to her vnderſtanding.*

Verſ. 9. *Ointment and perfume reioyce the heart: ſo doth the ſweetnes of a friend more then the counſell of his heart.*

THe ancient people of the Eaſterne countries, vſed to anoint their heads with their pretious ointments, and to perfume their houſes and garments with pleaſant and ſweete odours, to the end their ſpirits might be quickned, and their hearts reuiued: For thoſe things which delight the ſenſes, delight, and reioyce the heart, the foundation of all the ſenſes: and both here, and elſewhere in the Scripture, is the louing fellowſhip of Chriſtian friends reſembled vnto ſuch ointmēts and perfumes. *Behold* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *how pleaſant a thing it is, brethren to dwell together in vnitie: it is like the pretious ointment vpon the head, &c.* So comfortable was *Ionathan* to *Dauid*: and *Ruth* to *Naomi*: and *Oneſipherus* vnto *Paul*: and as vncomfortable an eſtate it is to be deſtitute of ſuch comforters: For among many calamities whereof *Dauid* complained, this was not the leaſt, *that he was like an owle, or pelicane of the deſart*: and in the ſame ſenſe *Iob* bemoneth himſelfe, ſaying, *I am a brother to Dragons, and a companion to owles. More then the counſell of his owne heart*; the aduice of ſuch a good friend, is more ioyous, and vſefull vnto him, eſpecially in his diſtreſſe, *then the counſels of his owne heart*, then the comfort or direction which he can minifter vnto himſelfe: For a mans Pſal. 133. 1. Tim. 1. 6. Pſal. 102.

owne counsell is blind in his owne matters, and the thoughts of his mind in aduersitie doe rather trouble him bee hee neuer so wise, then refresh his spirits, or free him from perplexitie.

Verse 10. *Thine owne friend, and thy fathers friend forsake not, neither goe into thy brothers house in the day of thy calamity; for better is an neighbour that is neere, then a brother far off.*

IN the former sentence he commended the comfort and benefit that proceeded from Christian friendship, and here hee teacheth to retaine, and make much of such Christian friends, and that by two arguments: the first, from the former experience of them, the stability, and ancientnesse of their kindnesse, that they haue remained firme and faithfull to our selues, and our parents, or other progenitors: the other is from the need that we may haue of them hereafter, and the fidelity, readines, and constancie to doe vs good, that we may expect to find in them. And this hee proueth by comparison, preferring them before naturall kinsmen, which are not so neerly vnited vnto vs by the bands of grace, and vnfained loue, *thine owne friend*, one whom thou hast had triall of to bee faithfull to thee, *and thy fathers friend*, which did heartily loue him, and in like maner was heartily beloued of him, *forsake not*, cast not off, but maintaine friendship with him, and testifie thy loue vnto him, in his necessity: for when friends are faithfull vnto vs, wee must be kind and constant to them. *Dauid* performed this to *Ionathans* seed, although *Ionathans* death would not permit him to shew it to his owne person, otherwise then by way of lamentation: and so he did to *Ahimelechs* sonne *Abiather*, whom hee vndertooke the protection of: whom also for the same cause *Salomon* spared, though he had dealt both vnkindly, and disloyally with him. And contrariwise *Pharaoh* was taxed for his vnmindfulnesse of *Ioseph*, and his posterity: and so is *Ioash* for his ingratitude to *Iehoiada*, whose worthy son *Zechariah* the Prophet of the Lord hee slew: *goe not into thy brothers house*, seeke not for compassion and succour at the hands of a fleshly kinsman, if he be wicked, and thou godly, *in*

the

the day of thy calamity, at what time thou ſhalt bee in pouerty, contempt, trouble, and diſtreſſe: for carnall kinſmen will faile thoſe of their owne fleſh in their greateſt aduerſity, as *Dauid* tried, and complained, ſaying; *My louers, and my friends ſtand a farre off from my ſore, and mine acquaintance ſtand farre off.* See chap. 19. 7. *For better*, more comfortable, and profitable, *is a neighbour*, friend, and acquaintance, *that is neere*, not onely in reſpect of the place, but of affliction, and good will, *then a brother that is farre off*, that is further diſtant in goodneſſe and loue, then in habitation. See chap. 18. 24.

Verſ. 11. *My ſonne bee wiſe, and make my heart glad, that I may anſwere him that reprocheth me.*

MY ſonne be wiſe,] The Wiſe man in the perſon of euery father, exhorteth euery ſonne to the ſtudie of wiſdome, and moueth him thereunto by two fruites that will ariſe from thence. The one is, that if he be ſo *wiſe*, as to know and obey the will of God, hee ſhall reioyce the heart of his father. See chap. 10. 1. and 23. 15. The other is, that hee by this meanes ſhall driue away reproch and ſhame from his father: for a fooliſh ſonne maketh his parents aſhamed. When a child is graceleſſe and euill manered, the people vſually blame his fathers gouernment, and ſay that hee was ill brought vp: but by the vertuous behauiour of a child, the parents are freed from ſorrow, and contumelie, and haue wherewith to ſtoppe their mouthes that goe about to blame them. The holy Ghoſt compareth good children to good weapons, by whom a godly man may defend his credit; as hee that hath a good weapon, with ſtrength and skill to vſe it well, ſhall thereby preſerue his perſon from the violence of an enemie. *As arrowes* (ſaith he) *are in the hand of a mighty man; ſo are the children of the youth: happie is the man that hath his quiuer full of them, they ſhall not be aſhamed, but they ſhall ſpeake with the aduerſaries in the gate.* Pſal. 127. 4. 5.

Verſ. 12. *A prudent man ſeeth the euill, and hideth himſelfe: but the ſimple paſſe on and are puniſhed.* See chap. 22.3.

13. *Take his garment that is ſurety for a ſtrange man, and make him giue a pledge that vndertaketh for a ſtrange woman,* See chap. 20.16.

14. *To him that bleſſeth his friend with a loud voice, riſing early in the morning ſhall be counted a curſe.*

TO *him that bleſſeth his friend,*] In way of praiſing and extolling him to his face, and in way of ſaluting him with a flattering minde, or fawning words, wiſhing well vnto him with his lips, and deſiring little good vnto him in his heart, *with a loud voice,* ſo that he may be heard of others, and by that leaud meanes purchaſe fauour from the partie, *aiſing early,* in the morning to doe it, ſhewing himſelfe firſt and before all others, to the end he may ſeeme the chiefeſt welwiller, *ſhall bee counted for a curſe,* ſhall turne to his owne ſhame and ignominie: for flatterie maketh a man odious, and reprochfull. What is more diſgraceful then to be called a paraſite, or clawbacke? and this oblique and infamie is iuſt vpon them, and belongeth vnto them for due deſert: for they onely ſerue themſelues, which intend to make a prey of thoſe whom they ſo much applaud, it is neither loue, nor good liking that doth induce them vnto it; but hope of acceptance and reward: and noyſome they are in many reſpects, and that to the partie whoſe eares they claw in this manner: for if his neighbour be a good man, hee taketh the way to corrupt his heart, and actions, and to make him proud: if he bee ſinfull and euill, hee doth as much as in him lieth to harden his heart, and retaine him from repentance. Yet it is not vnlawfull either to ſalute our friends, or to commend them iuſtly, ſo that it be done in a fit manner, or meaſure; not with a flattering mind, not too often; not too much; not too openly; but with a ſingle heart, modeſtly, ſparingly, when there is cauſe to incite them forwards to goodneſſe, and to animate them againſt diſcouragements,

ments, otherwiſe the ſafeſt way is to tell them of their faults vnto their face, and to ſpeake of their vertues behind their backes.

Verſ. 15. *A continuall dropping in a rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.*

16. *Whoſoeuer hideth her, hideth the wind, and the oyntment of his right hand which bewrayeth it ſelfe.*

IN theſe two verſes hee declareth the miſchieuous effects of an vnquiet and brawling wife: and firſt hee ſheweth what euill ſhe doth to her husband, and familie, comparing her vnto raine, ſoaking through the roofe of the houſe into the inward parts in wet ſeaſon: and ſecondly hee declareth what hurt ſhe doth to her ſelfe, laying open her ſhame, and making the world acquainted with her vnpeaceable behauiour, which he amplifieth by two ſimilitudes: the one from the *wind*, which cannot but be felt and heard: and another from an oyntment in a mans hand, the ſent whereof cannot be ſuppreſſed: *a continuall dropping*, into a mans houſe, vpon the peoples head, or the ſtuffe therein, *in a rainie day*, when the ſhowers are great, and it beateth in ſore, and a *contentious woman*, a woman giuen to much ſcolding, and chiding, *are alike*, both of them troubleſome, and both of them diſcommodious: for as the raine offendeth thoſe whom it falleth vpon, and rotteth the things which are wetted thereby, and conſumeth the ſame in time: So doth a contentious woman grieue all that dwell with her, and is a great hinderance to the eſtate of her husband. See cap. 19. 24. *Hee that hideth her*, hee that attempteth to huſh her brawlings and iarres, that they ſhall not be heard, *hideth the wind*, laboureth as much in vaine, as if he would goe about to couer, keepe cloſe, or ſhut vp the wind that it ſhould not blow, *ſhe is as an oyntment on his right hand*, wherewith his right hand is maintained, *that bewrayeth it ſelfe*, that will make all the houſe and company to ſmell the ſauour thereof; the word which we tranſlate *bewray*, ſignifieth to cry, which is improperly ſpoken of *oyntment*, becauſe it belongeth to liuing creatures: *iykra.*

tures: but maketh it ſelfe as ſenſible, as if it had a voyce to vtter or crie out withall: ſo that it is as poſſible to reſtraine the ſent of an ointment powred out, as to ſtop the infamie that ſhe bringeth vpon her ſelfe.

Verſ.17. *As a man ſharpeneth yron by yron, ſo doth the face of his friend ſharpen a man.*

AS *a man ſharpeneth yron by yron*] As men vſe to whet one knife that is blunt, or other edge toole, with another, and ſo make it keener to the end it may cut the better: *ſo doth the face*, the preſence of a friend with his communication, as exhortations, directions, incouragements, and the like, *ſharpen a man* to comfort, to humiliation, to knowledge, to loue, to diligence, and to all good workes. A man by himſelfe is often very dull, and like vnto a toole whoſe edge is blunted, or broken: but if his fellow come, and quicken him, by his company, by his ſpeech, or example, hee hath ſuch an edge ſet vpon him, as that he is much more skilfull, comfortable, and euery way better then he was being alone. Hence it is that the Scripture
Eccl.4.9. ſaith elſewhere, *that two are better then one*, and that *a threefold cord is not eaſie to be broken*. Hence it is alſo that the Apo-
Heb.10.24. ſtle exhorteth the Hebrewes, *not to leaue their mutuall fellowſhip in aſſembling: but to prouoke one another to loue, and good workes*. For this cauſe the Lord adioyned *Aaron* as an aſſiſtant to *Moſes*. And Chriſt ſent foorth his Diſciples by twoes, and twoes, that one might confirme and animate another in his meſſage, and ſeruices. So on the other ſide, the ſocietie and fellowſhip of wicked perſons together, doth mutually whet one another to miſchiefe, and intice him to euill, as we ſaw by another ſimilitude of coales kindling coales, in the former Chapter, verſ.1.

Verſe 18. *Who ſo keepeth the figtree ſhall eate the fruit thereof: ſo he that waiteth on his maſter ſhall be honoured.*

WHo *ſo keepeth the figtree*] As an husbandman watching his trees with a vigilent eye, and pruning them with

with a diligent hand, taſteth of the fruite thereof, according to their kindes, whatſoeuer they are: whether figges, or grapes, or apples, or peares, &c. So the ſeruant who is ſeruiceable to his maſter, and attendant about him, if it be his office, or otherwiſe truſtie in the affaires committed vnto him, *ſhall be honoured*, either preferred to a better place, or ſo well prouided for in that wherein he continueth, as that he ſhall enioy the credit and commoditie of his painfulnes and faithfulnes. They that haue not houſes, or charges of their owne, in ſtead thereof haue the buſineſſe and matters of their gouernours to looke vnto, and the well mannaging thereof in time may bring them to be maſters ouer others: or if it fall not out ſo, their condition will be as comfortable in that place of ſeruice, and inferioritie, as if they were greater commanders. See chap. 22. 29.

Verſ. 19. *As in water face anſwereth face: ſo the heart of a man to a man.*

WHoſoeuer looketh into water, or into a glaſſe, ſhall ſee the figure, or ſhape of a face, in all points like vnto his owne, of what faſhion, colour, or complexion ſoeuer hee be: *So the heart of a man anſwereth to a man*, what minde, affection, or diſpoſition is in one man, the ſame may be found in ſome other, which will rightly, or fitly accord with him in the ſame: there is ſcarce a man vnder heauen, which hath not one or other which doth not liuely repreſent him.

As for naturall inclination and deſires: one man is giuen to cheerefulnes, ſo is another: one man giuen to ſadnes, ſo is another: one man ſetteth his delight vpon literature, and all his ſtudie is how to be learned, ſo doth another: one man taketh pleaſure to bee a Merchant, and to aduenture his eſtate in traffick, ſo doth another: one man much affecteth trauelling, and to ſee forren countries, ſo doth another: one man addreſſeth himſelfe to husbandry, and to maintaine his eſtate by the commodities of the earth, ſo doth another: one man loueth a countrie life, and hee hath neighbours like minded: another would be a citizen, or courtier, and hee hath others that are willing

willing to ioyne with him therein. And so for spiritual graces: this man is much delighted in the word of God, his thoughts and meditations bee constantly in it, that man is also so affected, and his heart is carried the same way: this man is delighted with the fellowship and societie of Christians, and neuer so ioyous, as when he is in godly companie, and at holy conferences, that mans comfort and felicitie is in the same: this mans heart is much broken and wounded with the sight of his sinnes, and the sight of Gods displeasure, that man is no lesse humbled in the same manner. And this holdeth also in carnall corruptions: what sinner is there that may not finde companions and associates in all the vices whereunto hee is subiect? It were strange that a drunkard should want a mate to giue him the meeting at the tauerne, or alehouse: or a robber could get none to take his part at the taking of a purse: or that a gamester should be growne singuler that no man should delight to play at tables, cards or dice, but himselfe. A few instances may suffice for great multitudes of all sorts. And for naturall corruption in the general, deriued from our first parents, and wherein euery one is conceiued, all therein looke with one countenance, and haue one vizage: there was neuer any sonne, or daughter of *Adam* (Christ onely excepted) but hath been disfigured by birth since: *Moses* as well as *Pharao*, *Dauid* as well as *Saul*, *Paul* as well as *Elymas*, *Peter* as well as *Iudas*, that in this respect holdeth true touching any one, and euery one, that *the whole imagination of the thoughts of mans heart, is only euill continually.*

Gen.6.5.

Verse 20. *As the graue and destruction are neuer full: so the eyes of a man are neuer satisfied.*

AS *the graue and destruction are neuer full,*] As there is none end of burials, & death: but after one corps is buried, another wil come shortly to the same state, and the graue will consume them, and all that are put into it, and be still readie (as it were) with a wide mouth to receiue more: & though death, called here destruction (because it doth extinguish the vnreaso-

vnreaſonable creatures, and bringeth the wicked into perdition, and ſeemeth vnto ſenſe to be the finall ruine of the godly) doth take away many millions; yet it is as hungrie after more, as if it had neuer fed vpon any: *So the eyes of a man are neuer ſatisfied*, the concupiſcence of them is inſatiable: though he ſee much, and haue much, yet it is nothing in compariſon of that which he deſireth to ſee, and poſſeſſe: whether it be riches, or honour, or whatſoeuer his heart moſt luſteth after: For there is no contentednes in ſenſe, or worldly deſires: according as is ſaid in another place: *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the eare with hearing*. And therefore the complaint of the Prophet againſt the proud Babylonian, and all others of his condition, is pertinent vnto this purpoſe: *He hath inlarged his deſire as the graue, and is as death, and cannot be ſatisfied: but gathereth vnto him all nations, and heapeth vnto him all people*. Eccleſ.1.8. Hab.2.5.

Verſe 21. *As the fining pot for the ſiluer, and the fornace for gold: ſo is a man to his praiſe.*

AS the ſiluer is tried by the fining pot, and *gold* by the *fornace*, whether it be pure, or no: See chap.17.3. euen ſo a man is beſt iudged by that praiſe which is giuen of him, whether it be true, or no: For we are not to depend on other mens lips: but to examine the matter by our own knowledge, whether the commendation that is giuen of vs be due vnto vs, and deſerued of vs: For as a man may flatter himſelfe by compariſon to iuſtifie his owne waies, becauſe they are not ſo bad as ſome other mens: ſo he may alſo be illuded by teſtimonie giuen of him, to haue himſelfe in high admiration becauſe he is ſo well thought of, and ſpoken of. And therefore a rule like vnto this of *Salomons* is giuen by the Apoſtle *Paul*; but with more plainnes, *Let euery man proue his owne worke, and then he ſhall haue rejoycing in himſelfe only, and not in another*: For many flatterers ſpeake not as they thinke, but as they ſee it moſt aduantageous for their owne turnes, and therfore moſt highly extoll the vnworthieſt perſons, as *Tertullus* did *Felix* that Gal.6.4.

corrupt

corrupt gouernour. Againe, many teſtifie out of their loue, and hope that to be true which they ſay, but not out of their knowledge, they are not ſure that which they ſay is true; and therefore a man next vnto God is of all others the fitteſt to paſſe ſentence vpon himſelfe. Men be not ſo fooliſh, if they bee poore, and in great penurie, to beleeue them which ſhall magnifie their wealth, and praiſe their great plentie: nor a ſicke man feeling his torments, and weakeneſſes, will aſſent vnto him that ſhall commend his healthfulneſſe, and ſound conſtitution of body; and why then ſhould we ſuffer our ſelues to be miſinformed touching our actions and waies, and the ſtate of our ſoules?

Verſ. 22. *Though thou ſhouldeſt bray a foole in a morter among wheate with a peſtell, yet will not his fooliſhneſſe depart from him.*

THough thou ſhouldeſt bray,] One kind of grinding which people vſed in old time, was to put their parched corne into a morter, and to beate it vnto powder: vnto this cuſtome *Salomon* alludeth in this place, inſinuating that no ſeuerity will amend an obſtinate wicked man: for it is as much as if he ſhould haue ſaid; Although thou ſhouldeſt take neuer ſo great paines in reprouing, or correcting a deſperate foole, and the iudgements and plagues of the Lord be neuer ſo heauie vpon him, *yet his fooliſhneſſe will not depart from him*, hee is ſo vncurable, that he will not forſake his ſins, nor amend his faults, the hardneſſe of his heart is ſuch, that no ſtrokes or calamities will do him good. The graines of corne, though much hardned by parching, or drying, yet at the laſt wil be broken with a peſtell, and turned into ſoft meale; but his obſtinacie and wilfulneſſe will neuer bee ouercome; becauſe he is vncapable of graces, and no miſeries of themſelues without grace will cure ſinne. And therefore *Ieremiah* complaining of ſuch peruerſe and obſtinate rebels, ſaith; *O Lord, are not thine eyes vpon the truth? thou haſt ſtricken them, but they haue not grieued; thou haſt conſumed them, but they haue refuſed correction;*

Ier. 5. 3.

en; they haue made their faces harder then a rocke, they haue refuſed to returne. For ſmart, and griefe, and all kind of wofull calamities fall onely vpon the ſenſes, but enter not into the hearts of ſuch impenitent perſons; and the diuell which hath them in his power, neither feeleth the ſtrokes which they ſuffer, nor hath any commiſeration of their miſery; and therefore vnleſſe the peſtell could knocke him on the head, and expell his forces, it can doe no good vnto their ſoule.

Verſe 23. *Bee thou diligent to looke well to thy flockes, and know the ſtate of thy heards.*

IN this verſe he beginneth to perſwade men to be prouident for their eſtate, and not ſlacke to ſuperuiſe and ouerſee their owne affaires, and to look that there be no detriment through their negligence in their commodities, wherein their principall maintenance doth conſiſt; and perticularizeth in the duty of the graſier, or ſuch as liue by cattell, as a paterne for all other trades, or vocations. *Bee thou diligent to looke well to thy flockes,*] Conſider daily, or as often as is fit, the condition of thy ſheepe, oxen, and other cattell: looke to the number of them, leſt any be ſtollen, dead, or loſt: ſee how they bee prouided for with graſſe, fodder, or water, that they periſh not through want: looke well to it, and that with thine owne eye, that their paſture be ſafe and wholeſome, not ſuch as will breed a murren, or rot: take good notice how they are handled, or dreſſed, that they bee not anoyed with maladies, or hurtfull diſeaſes: for men are not ſo to paſſe ouer their eſtate to the care of others, as not ſo often as is needfull to take a view of it themſelues. *Boaz*, though hee were a great man, yet was not aſhamed to bee among his reapers, and harueſt men, and at the threſhing time to bee in the floore all night. For by this prouidence they ſhall preſerue their ſtate from ruine and decay: and deterre their ſeruants and agents from careleſneſſe, and aſſiſt them with direction and encouragement. Ruth. 3. 7.

Verſ. 24.

Verſ. 24. *For riches remaine not alway, nor the crowne from generation to generation.*

HE enforceth his precedent exhortation by two argu-ments; the former from the perill that may grow from improuidence and remiſneſſe, and that is penurie and want. This is not mentioned at all in expreſſe tearmes, but is neceſſa-rily vnderſtood, and intended; as it appeareth by the words of this verſe: for they are a preuention of an obiection that might be made againſt the former precept. Our meanes are ſo good, and our fortunes ſo great, that we need not trouble our ſelues with ouerſight of our cattell, or buſineſſe: though wee ſhould ſuſtaine loſſe by their vnfaithfulneſſe, whom we truſt in our af-faires, we can well beare it, we haue enough. Now this hee ta-keth away, by ſhewing the inſtability, or caſualtie of wealth, ſaying, *Riches remaine not alway:* and that he doth amplifie by a compariſon taken frõ the greater: Princes eſtates (which he meaneth by the name of *crowne*) are not perpetuall, much leſſe is the wealth of inferiours: as if he ſhould ſay, Doſt thou think that thy goods are ſo entailed vpon thee, that they are not ali-enable, or cannot goe from thee? thou art much deceiued ſo to deeme; for they are brittle, and flitting, though they be ne-uer ſo great and glorious. What treaſure in the world, bee it neuer ſo royall, or princely, which ſhall endure for euer? and not be exhauſted in the end, vnleſſe it bee maintained by care and diligence? and therefore looke well vnto thy things thy ſelfe, and reſt not ſlothfully in mans labour.

Verſ. 25. *The hay diſcouereth it ſelfe, and the graſſe appea-reth, and the hearbes of the mountaines are gathered.*

26. *The Lambes are for thy clothing, and the goates are a price of the field.*

27. *And let the milke of thy goates be ſufficient for the food of thy family, and ſuſtenence of thy maides.*

THe ſecond argument is from the commoditie which hee ſhall reape by obſeruing his counſell, applying himſelfe well

well to husband his matters, and to prouide that his eſtate bee well ordered; and that is food for his beaſts and cattell, in the firſt of theſe three verſes: and ſecondly, for the maintenance of himſelfe, and his familie, in the two laſt: *the hay diſcouereth it ſelfe*, when it is meet and readie for carriage, and inning, *and the graſſe appeareth*, ſpringeth plentifully out of the earth, *and the hearbs of the mountaines*, the graſſe, or other fodder that the mountaines yeeld, *are gathered*, cut downe, brought in, and layed vp, that they may be food and nouriſhment for the cattell: he ſpeaketh thus of the ſituation of that land, wherein there were a multitude of mountaines, which had things growing vpon them very vſefull, and all this commeth by the bleſſing of God, for the benefit of men, and cattell, according to the ſaying of the Prophet: *Hee cauſeth the earth to bring forth graſſe for the beaſts, and hearbe for the vſe of man, that he may bring forth bread out of the earth. The lambs are for thy clothing*, the good which himſelfe and his family ſhall receiue by his heedfull regard of his flocke, and heards, is firſt for apparel, *the lambes*, that is, the wooll and fleece of the lambes and ſheepe, *ſhall be for thy clothing*, wherewith both thou and thine ſhall be warmely, and comely clad. Secondly, for money, *the hee goates*, the male goates, and ſuch like cattell as may well be ſpared, being ſold, will bring thee money, not onely to the *price of thy field*, that is, the rent of the ground wherein they goe, if thou rent or hire the ſame of other men; or to yeeld thee ſo much as another would giue for it, if it be thine owne: and thereby thou ſhalt bee inabled to enlarge thy poſſeſſions, or make thee a purchaſer of lands. Thirdly, for food and ſuſtenance, *the goates milke ſhall be ſufficient for the food of thy houſhold, and maintenance of thy maides*, that is to ſay, the ſhe goats, the ewes, and the kine will giue thee ſuch abundance of milke, as will ſuſtaine thee, thy wife, and thy children, and thy ſeruants, both men and maides. So that beſide other prouiſion which thou maiſt make with thy money, thy ſelfe, and thy houſhold may haue butter and cheeſe enough, and other good vſe of milke, of thine owne flocke. This in thoſe daies was accounted good cheere for men of worth in that goodly countrey, Pſal. 104. 14.

trie, which God in kindneſſe promiſed, and out of his bountie performed; for which euery godly man hath cauſe to bee thankfull, and of which euery wicked man is altogether vnworthie; and therefore hee doth vpbraid his rebellious and wicked enemies, though opulent and wealthie, with that fauour which in this kind, among other benefits, he had ſhewen vnto them, ſaying; *Butter of kine, and milke of ſheepe, with fat of lambes and rammes fed in Baſhan, and goates with the fat of wheate, and red licour of the grape haſt thou drunke.* And as this is ſpoken againſt the wicked in way of exprobration: ſo a bleſſing is pronounced by *Iacob*, to the poſterity of *Iudah*, whom God would be bountifull vnto, in this manner; *His eyes ſhall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milke.*

Deut.32.14.

Gen.49.12.

CHAPTER. XXVIII.

Verſ.1. *The wicked flee when none purſue: but the righteous are bold as a Lion.*

THE *wicked flee,*] Are chaſed and hunted with feare: for though their feet ſtand ſtill, yet their hearts are continually in flight, *when none purſueth*, when no man followeth matter againſt them. It is a ſimilitude taken from cowardly ſouldiers, who betake themſelues to their heeles at the ſound of the trumpet, or drumme, and at the ſight of the enemies weapon, before they be aſſailed: for the guiltie perſon after he hath committed ſome abominable fact; as theft, murther, or ſome other crime, imagineth that ſome lie in wait for him, and that hee ſhall ſurely bee taken: for the bolder any man is to commit ſinne, the leſſe courage he hath when his conſcience is awakened, and there be any likelihood of danger: *The wicked* (ſaith *Eliphaz*) *is continually as one that trauelleth with child, and the number of yeeres is hidden from the tyrant, a ſound of feare is in his eares, and in his proſperity ſhall the deſtroyer come vpon*

Iob 15.20.

vpon him. For though no man pursue him, yet the guilt of his conscience doth; as did that bloodie *Kain*: and the righteous curse of Gods law maketh after them with all speed, euen that which is thus threatned in Leuiticus: *I will send a cowardlines vpon them in the land of their enemie, and the sound of a shaken leafe shall chase them: they shall flee as fleeing from the sword, and shall fall when none pursueth.* Now if they bee brought to this plight with imaginarie perils, and onely as yet assaulted with their owne thoughts; what will they doe when troubles and plagues, such as carrie stings in their mouthes, shall inuade and set vpon them? When their hearts shall heare their sins complaining against them, and Gods iustice decreeing punishment for them: men in this case *Isaiah* speaketh of, and bringeth in horribly terrified, saying; *The sinners in Sion are afraid, a feare is come vpon the hypocrites: who among vs shall dwell with the deuouring fire? who among vs shall dwell with the euerlasting burning?* *But the righteous*, who is at peace with God, and hath a good cause with a good conscience, is not so timerous, and full of cowardnesse as the wicked, but couragious and dreadlesse, notwithstanding all the malice, might, and craft of wicked men, which set themselues against them, neither can any other accidents or occurrents dismaie or daunt them. *Hee will not be afraid of euill tidings, his heart is fixed and beleeueth in the Lord: his heart is established: hee will not feare vntill hee see his desire vpon his enemies.* And this confidence and boldnesse is set forth by the comparison of the equall, he is like vnto a *Lion*, who is thus described by the Lord himselfe: *As the Lion, or Lions whelpe roareth on the prey, against whom if a multitude of shepheards be called, he will not be afraid at their voice, neither humble himselfe at their noyse: so shall the Lord of hosts, &c.* Grace therefore is the foundation of a good courage; for he that is endued therewith, is perswaded of the verity of Gods promises, with the sufficiencie of his power, and hath a sure apprehension both of his presence and goodnesse.

Leuit. 26. 36.

Psal. 112. 7. 8.

Isai. 31. 2.

Iob 11. 18.

Psal. 91.

Verſ.2. *For the tranſgreſſion of a land, there are many princes thereof: but by a man of vnderſtanding and knowledge it ſhall be prolonged.*

FOr *the tranſgreſſion of a land*] For the ſins which the people inhabiting the land doe commit, not the wickednes of ſome few priuate perſons, but the generall iniquitie of a nation, or ſtate, *there are many Princes*, often changes of the rulers and gouernours thereof, many Kings, or other head Magiſtrates, in a ſhort time ſucceeding one another, by meanes of the death of the predeceſſors: For the ſinnes of the people tend
1.Sam.12.25. to the hurt of the Ruler: *If you doe wickedly* (ſaith *Samuel*) *ye ſhall periſh, both ye and your King*. And for this cauſe the great rebellions of Iudah, both of the Prieſts, and Prophets, and people, ſhortned the life of *Ioſiah*: *Pharao Necco* could not haue touched him, if the iniquitie of his ſubiects had not expoſed him into his hands. The Magiſtrate is the head, and the people are the ſtomack; and what cauſeth the head to ake ſo much as the diſtemper and ſicknes of the ſtomacke? Hee is a ſhepheard, and they are the ſheepe, and men doe vſually put away their ſhepheards, or ſet them to ſome other worke, when all their ſheepe are rotten. *But by a man of vnderſtanding, and knowledge, it ſhall be prolonged*. In this latter part of the verſe he doth intimate, that as the corruptions and iniquitie of the people do cauſe the remoueall of their Princes: ſo the change of Princes is hurtfull, and dangerous to the ſtate of the kingdome, not onely for that by this meanes there are new officers placed, new tributes impoſed, and many alterations in the ſtate: but perill of ſeditions, ſtirres, and tumults, whereby both kingdomes and common-wealths are ſubuerted and brought to an end: and the cauſe thereof he oppoſeth to the contrarie: For hee ſetteth the wiſedome and knowledge of a good man (meaning of good men, putting the ſinguler number for the plurall by a *Synecdoche*, with the fruites thereof, which is obedience vnto God) to the rebellion of a land: and the continuance

nuance of Kings and kingdome, vnto the frequent mutations of Kings, and deſtruction of a realme. So that the oppoſition ſtandeth thus: *For the tranſgreſſion of a land*, and fooliſhnes of men, the Princes dye faſt, and the whole kingdome is not like to continue: but by the obedience of a land, and men of wiſedome, Princes liue long, and the kingdome is like to bee ſurely eſtabliſhed.

Verſ. 3. *A poore man if he oppreſſe the poore, is like a raging raine that leaueth no foode.*

A *Poore man if hee oppreſſe the poore,*] Either by fraude, or force, by bargaining or ſycophancie, and falſe calumniations, by extreame purſuite of actions, or aduantages, or by any other meanes, *is like a ſweeping raine*, like to ſtormes *that leaue no foode*, for men, or cattell to liue on: For euen as a great tempeſt doth make land-floods, and inundations of waters, ſweeping away, and choaking the corne, and beateth the fruite off from the trees, and cauſeth a dearth: ſo a mercileſſe poore man wreſting and extorting from others in neceſſity that little which they haue, doth bring them to extreame want and penurie. Vnconſcionable poore men therefore are as violent (if their power ſerue them) as the rich and wealthie. A Sparrow haulke is as greedie of his prey as an Eagle, and a Wolfe as rauenous as a Lion: the ſeruant that had but an hundred pence owing vnto him, was more rigorous and mercileſſe, then his maſter that had a thouſand tallents due vnto him. If all Magiſtrates ſhould bee as boyſterous to their inferiours, as many baſe maſters are to their apprentices, their yoke would be too heauie for the people to beare: neither are better things to be expected at vngodly poore mens hands, then from thoſe that are richer: for there is the ſame nature in all: and *Ieremiah* ſaith, that *the leaſt are giuen to couetouſnes as well as the greateſt.* And great men are leſſe pricked forward to iniuſtice by penurie and want, then theſe needie creatures and contemptible perſons: ſmall things will doe rich men no good: all is fiſh that commeth to the net with the hunger-ſtarued, and

miserable beggers, they meete with nothing which will not serue their turnes. There is hope, or at least a possibilitie, that that which is taken away by men of wealth, & substance, may be restored againe by mediation of friends, or by saluing of credit, or by some other meanes, or for some other causes: but that which these hungrie abiects get into their clutches, is as soone swallowed as fingered, neither care of credit will moue them, nor their abilitie will affoord them to make restitution.

Verse 4. *They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but they that keepe the law contend with them.*

THey that forsake the law,] They that sinfully liue in the breach of Gods holy law, and transgression of his Commandements, and make their owne fleshly reason, and sensuall lusts, the rule and square of their life, *praise the wicked*, giue incouragement vnto them, studie to finde out matter to commend in them, and for the same to giue good testimonie of them, that they haue euermore somewhat in a readinesse to speake in their behalfe, either to grace their person, or iustifie their faults: for euery man will most readily stand for them which be most like vnto them. As S. *Paul* reckoning vp many foule offences, saith, *They doe not only the same, but fauour them that doe them.* And the rebellious Israelites in the wildernesse, after they heard *Moses* and *Aaron* to conuince *Corah Dathan* and *Abiram* of notable presumption and arrogancie: after that they saw the Lord to execute a remarkable punishment vpon them, yet quarrelled against *Moses* and *Aaron*, in the defence of those execrable men and their complices, saying, *Ye haue killed the people of the Lord.* This is a sure note of euill, when men haue euermore a good word ready for an euill doer, and by crediting sinne in others, that they should haue no blemish for it, they seeke to abolish the disgrace from their owne former wickednes, and hope with lesse reproch and controlement to make a way for new: *but they that keepe the law*, which addict themselues with all their might to keepe Gods comman-

Rom.1.32.

Numb.16.41.

commandements, and with due care and conſcience obſerue, and obey them, *contend with them*, doe not onely diſcountenance, and diſpraiſe, but as much as they can oppoſe themſelues againſt them, & reſiſt them, notwithſtanding it be with ſome conflict and trouble vnto themſelues: For it is the propertie and ſure marke of a good man, not only to forbeare euil themſelues, but to ſtop and croſſe others that doe practiſe it: and this they doe in zeale to God, and in hatred to ſinne committed againſt him: as the Prophet profeſſeth, ſaying, *I hate them that hate thee, and earneſtly contend with them that riſe vp againſt thee.* And by this they keepe themſelues from being guiltie of other mens faults, and in as much as in them is, further the offenders to repentance.

Verſ. 5. *Euill men vnderſtand not iudgement: but they that feare the Lord vnderſtand all things.*

EVill men] Men giuen ouer to impietie and wickednes, *vnderſtand not iudgement*, albeit there be ſome light in them, which is after a ſort inforced vpon them, by the brightnes of Gods word, and ordinances, by the ſpeeches and communications of good men, which liue among them, and by the manifeſtation of Gods glorie in his workes; yet it ſerueth onely to make them inexcuſable, but not to procure their ſaluation, nor to direct them in their behauiour: they are alway ſo blinded with naturall ignorance, and malice, that both Chriſt and his word are a myſterie, wherewith their hearts are vnacquainted, though they be familiar to their eares to heare thē, and to their tongues to talke of them: they neither ſee what is to be beloued, nor rightly apprehend what is to be done, either generally in all ſorts of actions, or particularly in the courſe of their callings, and offices: For neither are they meet veſſels to receiue the licour of diuine wiſedome, neither haue they any deſire, or are induſtrious for to obtaine it: *but they that ſeeke the Lord*, they that ſeeke the Lord in his word, and by prayer, to the intent to doe him ſeruice, *ſhall vnderſtand all things*, which are needfull for their ſaluation, and diſcharge of

the duties of their callings. For all godly men are acquainted with God holy will, ſo farre as is neceſſarie for them: for as much as the *ſecret of the Lord is reueiled to them that ſeek him, and his couenant to giue them vnderſtanding:* For neither will the holie Spirit faile to informe them, neither will they neglect to inquire of him, nor to vſe their vnderſtanding fruitfully when they haue it.

Pſal.25.14.

Verſ.6. *Better is the poore that walketh in his vprightnes, then he that peruerteth his waies, though he be rich.* See chapter 19.1.

Verſ.7. *He that keepeth the law is a wiſe ſonne: but he that is a companion to gluttons ſhameth his father.*

HE *that keepeth the law*] That young man which applieth himſelfe to ſuch godly and vertuous behauiour, as the word of God doth teach, and preſcribe him, *is a wiſe ſonne*, ſheweth his wiſedome, vertue, and vnderſtanding, not only in ordering his waies as a Chriſtian; but in yeelding loyaltie to his parents, as a dutifull childe. *But hee that is companion to gluttons*, both in companie keeping, and luxurie, and riot, *ſhameth his father*, is a blemiſh vnto him, and giueth aduantage and occaſion, whereby of ſome hee is taxed and cenſured; beſides that ſeeing him come to extreame pouertie, or puniſhment, hee cannot but bluſh, and hang downe his head with ſhame and ſorrow. The ſenſe and oppoſition goeth thus: He *that keepeth the law, and refraineth the companie of diſſolute perſons, is a wiſe ſonne*, and a credit vnto his parents: but hee that breaketh the law, and is *a companion to gluttons*, is a fooliſh ſonne, and diſhonoureth his parents.

Verſ.8. *He that by vſurie and vniuſt gaine encreaſeth his ſubſtance, gathereth them for him that will bee mercifull to the poore.*

HE *that by vſurie and vniuſt dealing, &c.*] Which either getteth, or augmenteth his ſtocke, or eſtate by vnlawfull meanes:

meanes: for vnder theſe ſo oft by name condemned in the word, hee comprehendeth all others of whatſoeuer ſort they be, *gathereth them*, though much contrary to his purpoſe, thought, or will, *for him that will be mercifull to the poore*, which both compaſſionately affecteth, and liberally is handed towards them which are in neceſſity: It is as if he ſhould haue ſaid, the Lord doth appoint that the goods which diuers vſurers haue wickedly compaſſed, ſhall be taken from him, or his, and come into a good mans hand, who will giue the poore that which was before vniuſtly taken, either from them or their brethren: for that which wicked men ill come by, is many times left for the godly to vſe well. See chap. 13. 22. doct. 2. Eccleſ. 2. 21. Iob 27. 16.

Verſ. 9. *He that turneth away his eare from hearing the law, euen his prayer ſhall be abominable.*

HE *that turneth away his eare,*] Not he who through frailty, infirmity, or tentation hath ſometimes his heart interrupted at the hearing of the word, and hath attention, and ſo his affection blunted; or by the rebellion of naturall corruption reſiſting the ſpirit of God, doth now and then faile to obey the counſels or precepts of the word; but which wittingly, willingly, with obſtinacie and contempt reiecteth the commandements of God, and knowledge of his will, which deſpiſeth the ordinances of God, and refuſeth to bee inſtructed by his miniſtery, *euen his prayer*, and thankſgiuing, and all other his ſeruices eſpecially in his calamites that would come vpon him, when for miſery he ſhall hee compelled to crie, *ſhall bee abominable*, odious to the Lord, and ſuch as he will repell, and rather plague him for, then hearken vnto him, and accept: ſo that the beſt refuge which vngodly men haue for their ſoules, euen their good prayers which they truſt ſo much vnto, will faile thē at their need: and it ſtandeth with equitie, & he doth but returne them their owne meaſure: according to his complaint of them, and threatning againſt them: *Yea they refuſed to hearken, and plucked away the ſhoulder, and ſtopped their eares*

that they ſhould not heare: yea they made their hearts as an adamant ſtone that they ſhould not heare the law, and the words which the Lord of hoſts ſpake by his former Prophets: therefore came great wrath from the Lord of hoſts: therefore it came to
Iſa.7.11.12.13. *paſſe that as he cried, and they would not heare; ſo they ſhall crie and I will not heare, ſaith the Lord.* They themſelues are execrable and loathſome, and then how can the prayers, the berries of ſuch manner of brambles be eſteemed any better? they are not preſented to God by Chriſt, nor offered by them in faith; and therefore God cannot take notice of them otherwiſe then in deteſtation, and indignation.

Verſ. 10. *Who ſo cauſeth the righteous to goe aſtray in an euil way, hee ſhall fall himſelfe into his pit: but the righteous ſhall haue good things in poſſeſſion.*

WHo ſo *cauſeth*,] Endeauoureth by attempt, or for a time, or in a part ſucceedeth to cauſe *the righteous to goe aſtray by an euill way*, in the way of ſinne which is euill for the matter of it, and for effect of it, that it bringeth euill, and plagues to thoſe that wander in it, *ſhall fall into his owne pit*, ſhall not onely loſe his labour in ſeeking to corrupt another; but ſhall through Gods iudgement fall into the danger that hee hoped to draw the iuſt into: as *Balaam* did in laying a ſtumbling blocke before the children of Iſrael, by teaching the Moabites to allure them to that filthie and idolatrous feaſt of *Baal Peor*: for it is turned into his ruine and deſtruction: for he was therefore ſlaine in a ſhort time after. All this is an allegorie wherein he alludeth to hunters, who vſe ſtratagems to induce the beaſts which they haue in chaſe to the way that leadeth into the pit which they haue digged, and couered to take him, who being fallen thereinto, is in their power to doe what they will with. See chap. 26. 27. *But the righteous*, the vnhappie euent of theſe their practiſes, and their ill ſucceſſe therein, is amplified by the contrary, the ſafety and happineſſe of thoſe whom they layed waite for to peruert, *ſhall haue good things in poſſeſſion*, the righteous ſhall bee preſerued from ſuch a fall

a fall as they doe expect, and enioy that happineſſe which they doe maligne: for it is impoſſible for him that is vpright to bee drawne from God by ſeducers: election will hold him faſt, and the ſpirit of God will not ſuffer him to bee ouercome, or loſt: neither may the promiſes of God, made vnto him for the enioyment of all good things, be void or fruſtrate. Mat 24.24. Reuel.13.8. 1.Ioh.2.27.

Verſ. 11. *The rich man is wiſe in his owne conceit, but the poore that hath vnderſtanding can try him.*

THe rich man is wiſe in his owne conceit,] Hee that hath great ſubſtance, and little grace, hath an opinion of himſelfe, that he is of great vnderſtanding, iudgement, and policy, though he bee neuer ſo abſurd, ſimple, and fooliſh; becauſe wealth is a great meanes to puffe vp the heart, and make a man proud. And therefore Saint *Paul* requireth *Timothy* to lay a great charge on rich men, that they be *not high minded*. *Ezechiel* bringeth the opulent and wealthie Prince of Tyrus vpon the ſtage, and ſheweth him vnto the world, acting a part for this purpoſe, ſaying; *I am a God, I ſit in the ſeat of God in the middeſt of the ſea, yea thou art but a man, and not a God, and though thou diddeſt thinke in thine heart thou was equal with God: Behold thou art wiſer then Daniel, there is no ſecret that they can hide from thee. With thy wiſedome and vnderſtanding thou haſt gotten thee riches, and thine heart is lifted vp becauſe of thy riches.* And why is this? but becauſe they are ignorant, they know not, or conſider not that it was God which gaue, and not their owne wit which got them this abundance: and becauſe they carrie matters by power, they deeme that they order and manage them by policie; and becauſe no man dares rebuke them, they thinke their waies ſo ballanced with diſcretion, as that they are vnrebukeable. And becauſe many flatterers giue them high commendation, they imagine that there is as much in themſelues, as they can deuiſe to commend: *but the poore that hath vnderſtanding can ſearch him out*, but the godly poore man who knoweth the word, and is indued with diſcretion, will ſo ſearch and find the rich man out, that hee will 1.Tim.16.17. Ezech.28.2.3.4

diſcerne,

diſcerne, (and if need require,) declare him to be either an ignorant or wicked perſon, as may appeare in the blind mans conference with the Phariſees. And this commeth to paſſe becauſe he ſearcheth into Gods word, to know his will, and into his owne heart, to know the ſtate thereof; and therefore can eaſily take another tripping, which is altogether a ſtranger vnto Gods will, and the ſtate of his owne ſoule.

Verſ. 12. *When the righteous reioyce there is glory: but when the wicked riſe, the man is ſought for.*

WHen the righteous reioyce,] When good men are exalted to dignitie and honour, and haue authority put in their hands, and ſo reioyce in the fauour and mercy of God thus bleſſing them: and (hee argueth the cauſe by the effect) the inferiours are enriched, and adorned with many ornaments, both the publike ſtate of the nation is much honoured with power and ſafety, and priuate mens perticular eſtates are prouided for, and bleſſed with all good proſperity, by meanes of their iuſtice, and vpright dealing, and care to doe good to their countrie. See chap. 11. verſ. 10. and 11. *but when the wicked riſe*, to authority, credit, and greatnes in the Commonwealth, *the man is ſought out*, ſearched for to bee oppreſſed and made a prey: the meaning is, that when wicked men are aloft, the people which are not ſo bad as themſelues, can neither haue ſafety from their perſons, nor poſſeſſions; but either by fraud, or by force, themſelues, and the ſecreteſt things which they haue are ſearched out, and looked vnto, that they may be a bootie to the vngodly. It falleth out many times, and in diuers countries, that when their owne brethren beare not rule, as it did in Iſrael, when the ſtrangers the Midianites had inuaded the land, that that which was not cloſely hidden, could not be kept out of the clutches and clawes of thoſe rauenous cormorants: and therefore it was ſaid of *Gedeon*, that he was *threſhing wheate to hide it from the Midianites*. This was moſt cleere executed in *Achabs* time, when hee ſought about euery where for the Prophets of God, and in ſpeciall

Iudg. 6. 11.

manner

manner for *Eliah*, to put both him and the reſt to the ſword. The ſenſe is this, when *righteous men* flouriſh, *and are in authoritie*, there is great equity vſed; and therefore *great glorie*, and welfare to the people: but when the wicked are ſet vp, there is great tyrannie and oppreſſion, and therefore great calamitie and miſerie.

Verſ. 13. *He that couereth his ſinnes ſhall not proſper: but who ſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall find mercy.*

HE *that couereth his ſinnes*,] Either by denying that euill which hee hath done, or extenuating of it, or by neglecting to acknowledge it to the Lord with godly griefe and ſorrow, or by liuing ſtill in it and continuing therein impenitently, *ſhall not proſper*, ſhall not eſcape all plagues and iudgments, but ſhall feele the curſes of God one way or other ſeazing vpon him; either ſtrokes ſhall come vpon his bodie, and fill him with torment; or his naughtineſſe ſhall bee detected, and ſo bring reproch vpon his name; and his eſtate ſhall be ouerturned, & neceſſity ouertake him; or his children and poſterity ſhall be plagued and ouerthrowne; or his ſoule bee purſued with horrours and feares; or death with a venomous ſting ſhall ſlay him, and ſo damnation, and finall deſtruction prey vpon him for euermore: *but he that confeſſeth*, vnfainedly with Chriſtian remorſe and contrition, and as fully as he can, before God, if they bee ſecret, or before men, if they bee publike and open, *and forſaketh them*, as much as hee can by reſiſting of them, praying and ſtriuing againſt them, and ſeeking all meanes of helpe by Gods word, and mens admonitions and counſels to vanquiſh and ſubdue them, *ſhall find mercy*, ſhall be pardoned, iuſtified, ſanctified, and in the world to come euerlaſtingly glorified: he ſhall bee deliuered from the guilt of them; hee ſhall bee ſaued from the puniſhment of them; hee ſhall bee aſſiſted againſt the violence and power of them; and his outward man, and his inward man, his ſoule and his bodie ſhall be preſerued from the venome and poyſon of them: for confeſſion of ſinne is neceſſarie for the comfort of remiſſion: Iob 31.33.

for

Leuit.26.24. Pſal.32. for hereby we giue glory to God; as *Ioſhua* perſwaded *Achan* to doe: and hereby we helpe our hearts to bee the more penitent, and the better humbled for them. The oppoſition is: *He that hideth his ſinne*, by refuſing to *confeſſe and forſake them*, ſhall finde no mercie, and therefore ſhall not proſper; but hee that layeth open his ſinne by confeſſion, and reiection of them, *ſhall finde mercy*, and therefore proſper.

Verſ.14. *Happie is the man that feareth alway: but hee that hardneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchiefe.*

HAppie is the man,] For Gods fauour, and all comfortable effects thereof, both preſent and future, both temporall and euerlaſting; for enioyment of all goodneſſe, and freedome from all miſchiefe, *which feareth*, with reuerence and godly awe to offend the Lord by breaking his commandements, or hauing faulted, to lie ſecurely in his ſinnes without ſpeedie humiliation and repentance, *alway*, as well at one time as at another, not fearing for any houre, or day, or moneth, or by fits (as ſome which haue an ague-like dread, now and then vpon them:) but all the daies of his life, and all ſeaſons thereof ſo farre as poſſible: for our nature is continually trecherous, ſeeking aduantages for the hurt of our ſoule; and the diuell goeth about like a roring Lion, that no place, nor time, nor exerciſe doth free vs from his aſſaults or inuaſion; and God which is alway equally iuſt, is continually beholding of vs, and of our waies: *but hee that hardeneth his heart*, which putteth away feare, and imboldeneth himſelfe in an euill way, hearkening vnto all enticements, and the perſwaſion of ſeducers, and to the fleſhly diſcourſes of his owne mind, which may animate him in his luſts, and euill deſires, and practiſes, and turneth away his eare from thoſe which by faithfull counſell would detaine him from ſinne, and bring him to repentance, for that whereof he already ſtandeth guiltie, *ſhall fall into miſchiefe*, by doing of that which will make him ridiculous, and odious to God and men, or ſuffering of that which ſhall be a teſtimonie of Gods iudgement, and an intollerable burthen vpon him, for greater

greater then euer he ſhall be able to beare: For of all hurts, or miſeries that are incident vnto a man, before he fall into hell, that of hardnes of heart is abſolutely the greateſt: for thereby the Lord doth puniſh the contempt of his word, and other grieuous ſinnes: and that is a certaine forerunner of ſome remarkable iudgement: as the caſe of *Pharao*, and other obſtinate and obdurate Egyptians doth witneſſe vnto the world, and ſo will doe to the worlds end. The Antitheſis is: *He that feareth alway* is a bleſſed man, and ſhall enioy goodneſſe: but *he that hardneth his heart* is in a wofull eſtate, *and ſhall fall into miſchiefe.*

Verſ. 15. *As a roring Lion and a roring Beare: ſo is a wicked ruler ouer the poore people.*

AS *a roring Lion* terrifieth the poore beaſts with his noiſe, and praieth vpon them with his teeth: and as a Beare hunteth vp and down to ſearch them out, and teare them with her pawes: *ſo is a wicked ruler ouer the poore people:* ſo vngodly ſuperiours of all ſorts, picke quarrels at, threaten, oppreſſe, and make ſpoile of ſuch as can make no reſiſtance: For the greater any godleſſe man is, the more ſauage and beaſtly he is: the more violence and crueltie he ſheweth, the more extreame hurt and miſchiefe he worketh. The wicked of the loweſt degree doe carrie as cruell hearts, as thoſe of higher rankes and places, but their power anſwereth not vnto their will: they are incountred and ouermatched where they attempt to offer wrong and iniurie, and may therefore be likened to curres, or little dogs which hunt after conies. Dan. 7. 45. Zeph. 3. 3.

Verſe 16. *The Prince that wanteth vnderſtanding, is alſo a great oppreſſor: but he that hateth couetouſnes ſhall prolong his daies.*

IN the former ſentence hee declared the tyrannie, and hard dealing of ſinfull mightie men: and heere hee ſheweth the cauſes of the ſame, and they are, loue of couetouſnes which is intimated,

intimated, and want of ſound knowledge which is expreſſed:

Pſal. 28. 5. Iere. 22. 17. Exod. 18. 21. *But he that hateth couetouſnes*, which is not carried away with greedie deſire of getting ſubſtance, and increaſing his eſtate, *ſhall prolong his daies*, taketh the way to pleaſe the Lord, for the lengthening of his life, and ſafetie againſt all ſuch euils as otherwiſe would indanger his life, as thoſe doe which accompanie and ſpring from this ſinne of couetouſneſſe and crueltie.

The Antitheſis is: *The Prince that wanteth vnderſtanding*, delighteth in couetouſnes: and therefore ſhall ſhorten his owne life: but a wiſe Prince hateth couetouſnes, and exerciſeth mercie, iuſtice, and therefore *ſhall prolong his daies*.

Verſe 17. *A man that doth violence to the blood of a perſon, ſhall flee into the graue, and let none ſtay him.*

HE *that* in hatred, or rage, or for any priuate, or vnlawfull reſpect, *offereth violence to the blood of a perſon*, doth ſhed blood, or take away a mans life, *ſhall flee into the graue*, make haſte vnto deſtruction, be in perpetuall chaſe vntill hee fall in it: For bloody men doe commonly liue in danger of life, and in horror of heart, *euill ſhall hunt the violent man to ouerthrow him* (ſaith the Prophet). God plagued *Kain* with two iudgements, with depriuall of his life: for the Lord reſerued him of purpoſe to haue him hunted a while in his ſoule with terrors (like a Stagge, or a Hart, or Hare) before he killed him: and with danger of death, which he feared horribly, becauſe hee looked for nothing in it but condemnation. And that is the ſtate of all his ſonnes, of whom there be many yet liuing, which may truly call him father: notwithſtanding all that naturally deſcended out of his loynes were drowned at the flood. God hath a quarrell, and innocent blood crieth, and will be heard, and reuenged againſt euery murtherer, which preuenteth not the ſtroke of vengeance by repentance: euen Kings, ſuch as *Achab*, *Ioaſh*, and others being guiltie hereof could not poſſibly eſcape the penaltie. *He that ſheddeth*

Genes. 9. *mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed* (ſaith the Lord) *And let*

let none ſtay him, let no man be an agent for his impunitie: let no tongue ſolicite for him: let no hand write for him: let not inferiours ſue for his pardon, and let not Magiſtrates grant him a pardon: for they are directly forbidden. *Thine eye ſhall not ſpare him: but thou ſhalt put away the crie of innocent blood, that it may goe well with thee: For the land cannot be purged but by the blood of him that ſhed it.* Deut.19.13.

Verſ.18. *He that walketh vprightly ſhall be ſaued: but hee that peruerteth his waies ſhall fall at once.*

HE *that walketh vprightly*] That leadeth a godly and iuſt conuerſation with a faithfull and ſincere heart, *ſhall be ſaued* from ſinne and Satan: For righteouſnes is a breaſt-plate againſt the weapons of them both: from the hurt of perſecutions, and troubles: and from death and damnation. See chap.10.9. Pſa.39.40. *But he that peruerteth his waies*, he that leadeth a diſſolute and impious life, which walketh in the crooked paths of ſinne, *ſhall fall at once*, they ſhall be like to thoſe that trauell in a dangerous way, though faire and ſmooth, which is to their liking, and contenteth them well vntil they be ouer head and eares in a pit, a quickſand, or quagmire, and ſo all their paine and woe will come together, and that to his ruine and deſtruction, as appeareth by the former part of the Antitheſis. See chap.4 19.

Verſ.19. *He that tilleth his land ſhall haue plentie of bread: but he that followeth the idle, ſhall haue pouertie enough.* See chap.12.11.

Verſ.20. *A faithfull man aboundeth with bleſſings: but hee that maketh haſte to be rich, ſhall not be vnpuniſhed.*

A *Faithfull man*] He that dealeth vprightly and ſoundly with men, and is not willing to deceiue any in word or deede, carrying himſelfe ſincerely toward God, as hee liueth honeſtly amongſt his neighbours, and that not onely in one matter, but in all, and is therefore in the originall text called *a*

man of faithfulnes, ſhall abound in bleſſings of all ſorts, with plentie ſo farre as is expedient with good eſtimation, with kinde friends, with ſpirituall graces, &c. See chap.10.6. *But he that haſteth to be rich*, ſetting his deſire vpon wealth, and vſing indirect meanes to compaſſe it, or is a bondſlaue to the world in his workes and vocations, wherein he ought only to ſerue the Lord, *ſhall not be vnpuniſhed*, ſhall not eſcape without plagues and iudgements: hee maketh more haſte then good ſpeed in getting ſo faſt: For beſides that, being ſo greedie to be rich, *he falleth into ſnares, temptations, and noyſome luſts which drowne men in perdition*, hee meeteth with croſſes, and loſſes in his eſtate in ſtead of gaine and commoditie: and the end is like to be wofull, either for the loſſe of goods, or the loſſe of his life, or the loſſe of his ſaluation, and thereto poſteth with all haſte, like as fowles flying to the prey are oft intercepted in their flight, or made to ſtay with the pellet of a ſtone bow, or ſhot of a peece. *Achans*, and *Achabs* ſucceſſes are both of them remarkable, and ſuch as God would haue all poſterities to take knowledge of for their admonition. The oppoſition is this: He that is contented with his eſtate, is a faithfull man, and ſhall be rewarded with bleſſings: but hee that haſteth to riches is an vnfaithfull man, and ſhall bee puniſhed with curſes.

Verſ.21. *To haue reſpect of perſons is not good: for that man will tranſgreſſe for a peece of bread.*

TO *haue reſpect of perſons is not good.* See chap.23.24. *For that man will tranſgreſſe*, Gods law and mans law by peruerting of equity and iudgement, *for a peece of bread*, for a ſmall matter, for a thing of no importance: and what would he do thē for a great bribe, for much money, for hope of large aduantage & commoditie? He that beareth ſo little affection to iuſtice, as that he will violate it for a trifle; how ſhall it find any fauour frō him, when he ſhal be feed againſt it with a treaſure? He that ſetteth ſo light by his ſoule, as that he will ſell it dog cheape, and for a matter of nothing; how willing would he be

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to make a ſale thereof, and to paſſe it away vnto hell and damnation, if he might get a great ſumme of money for it?

Verſe 22, *A man of an euill eye haſteth to be rich, and conſidereth not that pouertie will come vpon him.*

A *Man of an euill eye*] A couetous worldling, a niggard, a churle, who is noted to be a man *of an euill eye:* becauſe his eye doth make him to deſire other mens goods, to enuie his neighbours proſperitie, and to begrudge thoſe that come vnto his table, the very meate which they eate: as appeareth chap. 23.6.7. *haſteth to be rich*, ſetteth his minde vpon wealth, and in all the haſte would be maſter of it, hoping by toyling, and pinching, and falſehood, and all corrupt ſhifts to attaine to abundance, *and conſidereth not*, little thinketh, or dreameth that euer he ſhall proue a begger, or a bankerupt, though pouertie purſue him ſo faſt that it is readie to tread vpon his heeles. See chap. 21. verſ. 5.

Verſ. 23. *He that rebuketh a man ſhall finde more fauour in the end, then he that flattereth with his tongue.*

HE *that rebuketh a man*] Vpon iuſt cauſe, in loue, and the ſpirit of meeknes, with wiſedome and diſcretion, *ſhall find more fauour in the end*, though at the firſt he ſeeme to blow the fire, and kindle the flame of diſpleaſure and hatred againſt himſelfe, *then hee that flattereth with his tongue*, which doth ſooth men in their corruptions, and animate them in their ſinfull way: for plaine and faithfull dealing with other, is the readieſt way to procure loue and good liking to ones ſelfe. The falſe prophets were wont to ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked Kings of Iſrael, and to giue them allowance in all their ſinnes: and yet *Eliſha* which told them of their faults, and reproued them plainly, was more countenanced and graced by them, then all the crue and rabble of thoſe ſweete mouthed clawbacks: for God hath mens hearts in his hands, and diſpoſeth of all their mindes and affections. If they bee religious

and godly, his words and grace will cause them to entertaine their louing admonitions with loue, and good acceptance: for they discerne of thy faithfulnesse, and the benefit that accreweth vnto them by thy rebukes: if as yet they bee not wise and godly, yet in time they may, and thine admonition may be an helpe to cure them of their follie, and assoone as they are healed, they will forthwith grow thankfull. And what though they should remaine peruerse, and neuer bee reformed, nor come to acknowledge thy faithfull dealing? yet others will, as we reade in another sentence, and God himselfe will giue thee praise and commendation, as he abhorreth those that iustifie the wicked: and it is in his power to make euery man either beloued, or hated, to be honoured, or to be despised.

1.Cor.14.25.

Prou.24.25.

Vers. 24. *Who so robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression, the same is a companion to a destroyer.*

WHo so robbeth his father or his mother,] Spoileth them of their substance, & the things they haue, *and saith*, either in his mind to himselfe, or with his tongue to others, by way of iustification, *it is no transgression*, it is a matter of nothing, what need all these stirres about it? these goods belong to mee, they should bee mine in time, I haue my part in them, why should I not take some of them? *is a companion to a destroyer*, is to be reckoned with a manslayer, and is to be punished with death as well as hee: for wrongs done to a mans parents are more hainous then such as are offered to common persons: for it is an high breach of Gods commandement which enioyneth children to honour their parents: and if it be so necessarie to relieue them, and so great a fault to be negligent of them, it must needs be a great indignitie, and fearfull offence to bereaue them of their substance which should maintaine them; and to lay theeuish hands vpon that which a good child after a sort would esteeme as sacred: and how can a matter of greefe be giuen vnto them, but the same is also giuen vnto the Lord, for violation of his law, if hee were not a God, and impatible of griefe?

Exod.21.15.

Vers. 25.

Verſ. 25. *He that is of a proud heart ſtirreth vp ſtrife: but he that truſteth in the Lord ſhall be made fat.*

HE *that is of a proud heart,*] Which hath large deſires of honour and applauſe, and would haue no preferments or praiſe, to paſſe by himſelfe to others, *ſtirreth vp ſtrife*, maketh quarrels, and raiſeth contentions for that he deſpiſeth his brethren, and neuer thinketh himſelfe to be ſufficiently reſpected according to his worthines, and neuer at any time to be worthie of croſſes, deniall, or reſiſtance: for pride is the roote of all contentions. See chap. 13. 10. *but hee that truſteth in the Lord*, which is lowlie in his owne eyes, not repoſing confidence in the fleſh, but in the truth, mercy, and omnipotencie of God, *ſhall be made fat*, ſhall be enriched with bleſſings, and good proſperity, like thoſe bodies that are healthie and in good plight, faring well, and well digeſting their meate: or rather like vnto ſheep, or other cattell, which feed in good paſture, and haue a good keeper to owne them, and to looke vnto them. To this purpoſe tendeth the whole three and twentieth Pſalme. The ſame ſimilitude *Malachy* vſeth, ſaying; *but to you that feare my name ſhall the ſonne of righteouſneſſe ariſe, healing ſhall be vnder his wings, and ye ſhall goe forth as calues of the ſtaule.* Mal. 3. 2. Wheras on the contrarie ſide, thoſe high minded and turbulent contenders may bee compared to wolues, and maſterleſſe dogges which liue by ſpoyles, and are driuen to rauen about for all that they eate, and therfore are leane, thinne, and hunger-ſtarued. The oppoſition is: *He that is of a proud heart*, truſteth to himſelfe, ſtirreth vp ſtrife, and is penurious, and pinched with neceſſity: but he that is of an humble heart truſteth in the Lord, delighted with peace, and *fatte* with plentie.

Verſ. 26. *He that truſteth in his owne heart is a foole: but he that walketh wiſely ſhall be deliuered.*

HE *that truſteth in his owne heart,*] In himſelfe, or any thing belonging to himſelfe, as in his wiſedome, in

ſtrength, in his riches, ſpecially in his merits and goodneſſe, which imagineth that he hath no need of the helpe or aduice of others, and refuſeth to follow the direction that is giuen by the miniſtery of Gods word, or the counſell of his faithfull friends, *is a foole*, impious and wicked, abſurd, ſottiſh, and improuident for himſelfe: for God will conuince him of follie, by inflicting plagues vpon him for his fooliſh conceit, and ſinfull behauiour: *but he that walketh wiſely*, that prudently demeaneth himſelfe, according to the counſels and precepts of wiſedome, following the ſame, and not the fond perſwaſion of his owne mind, *ſhall be deliuered*, ſhall bee preſerued from falling into plagues and iudgements, and holpen out of thoſe inexecrable calamities, wherewith he ſeemeth irrecouerably intangled. The oppoſition is: *He that truſteth in his owne wiſedome is a foole*, walketh fooliſhly, and ſhall both ſinke into, and bee held faſt in miſerie: but hee that hath no confidence in himſelfe, *walketh wiſely, and ſhall be deliuered.*

Verſ. 27. *He that giueth to the poore ſhall not lacke: but he that hideth his eyes ſhall haue many curſes.*

HE *that giueth*,] Liberally and freely *to the poore*, to ſuch as ſtand in need, *ſhall not lacke*, any thing that God ſhall ſee to be good, or meet for him. See chap. 11. 25. and 22. 9. *but he that hideth his eyes*, from the poore, from beholding their miſerie, that either will not looke vpon them in their wants, or diſtreſſes, or not bee affected with commiſeration or pitie at the ſight thereof: (for ſome reſtraining their ſight or preſence, they will not at all come vnto, viſit, or ſee their brethren in their neceſſities and afflictions: others caſt their eyes vpon them, but without all compaſſion, or feeling, and are nothing thereby ſtirred vp to beneficence, and mercy) *ſhall haue many curſes*, is ſubiect to haue manifold plagues from the Lord, both before their death, and at the reſurrection: for if the Lord doe ſo ſeuerely puniſh a pitileſſe eare that will not compaſſionately hearken to the cries of the poore, that the partie himſelfe ſhall crie often, and not bee heard, hee will no more

more ſpare a mercileſſe eye, that will take no notice of the needs of them that are oppreſſed with ſcarcitie and famine: but that he ſhall ſhew his lamentable ſtate, and not be holpen.

Verſ. 28. *When the wicked riſe, men hide themſelues: but when they periſh, the righteous encreaſe.*

WHen *the wicked riſe,*] To promotion and gouernment, they raiſe vp ſuch ſtormes, that godly and righteous men are driuen to ſeeke ſhelter or couer againſt their tyrannie, or outrage: as *Dauid* did in *Sauls* time: as the Prophets did in *Achabs* time; and thoſe holy men ſpoken of in the Hebrewes, which *wandred vp and downe in ſheepe skins, and goate skins, in wildernesſes, and mountaines, dens, and caues of the earth: But when they periſh,* when they die: (for the death of the wicked is periſhing) or are put out of their offices, or depoſed from their dignities, or ſinke in their eſtate, *the righteous encreaſe,* both in number, and courage; becauſe thoſe that through feare kept themſelues cloſe before, doe boldly appeare and ſhew themſelues. They ſwarme as a hiue of Bees in a warme ſunnie day: they multiply and encreaſe in cities, townes, and countreyes, boldly embracing the truth, and performing the duties of righteouſneſſe themſelues, and winning others to the ſame by their perſwaſion, and example: for the deſtruction of the wicked is the good of the Church; as it came to paſſe after *Hamans* hanging: for not onely the Iewes had encouragement, and free liberty to ſerue the Lord, and to exerciſe his worſhip; but others alſo adioyned themſelues vnto them, and embraced their religion: for it is ſaid, that many *of the people of the land became Iewes.* The oppoſition is: *When the wicked riſe, the righteous hide themſelues,* and are diminiſhed: *but when they periſh,* they ſhew themſelues, and are *encreaſed.* Heb. 11. Pſal 49. 10. 14. Heſt. 8. 17.

CHAPTER. XXIX.

Vers. 1. *Hee that being often reproued hardeneth his necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, without remedie.*

IN the former part of this sentence the sinne of obstinacie is reproued; in the latter, the punishment is declared: the sinne is, *that being often reproued*, by Gods ministery, or mens rebukes, *hardeneth his necke*, refuseth to submit himselfe, (it is a metaphor taken from oxen, or other beasts, that reiect the yoake which should bee put vpon them, and will not bow their necke vnto it,) the same similitude is vsed in the prophesie of *Zacharie*, where it is said; *That they receiued to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their eares that they should not heare.* The punishment is; *he shall suddenly be destroyed without remedie*, wherein their plagues are aggrauated, and made grieuous by three circumstances: the first is the suddennesse, that they shall come speedily, and vnwares vpon them; when they shall bee least looked for, or feared, they shall seaze vpon them sooner then they thought, and make strange alteration sooner then could bee imagined: the Lord will not be a long time in bringing them to ruine, as they by the space of many daies, moneths, or yeers together refused correction: but hee in an houre, or shorter space, will quite ouerthrow them. The second is the quantity or greatnesse there of, *shall be destroyed*, or as the word is, broken in peeces: it will not bee a small punch, but an heauie stroke, it will crush them, according as hee saith in the second Psalme, *Thou shalt breake them in peeces like a potters vessell*, it will be their downefall, and vtter vndoing. The third is the continuance, or perpetuitie of their misery, it is *without remedie*, like a desperate disease, or death it selfe, that can neuer be cured. *Isaiah* doth in like manner exaggerate this their destruction

ſtruction by the ſelfeſame adiuncts, or circumſtances, ſaying; *This iniquitie ſhall be to you as a breach that falleth, or a ſwelling in an high wall, whoſe breaking commeth ſuddenly in a moment, and the breaking thereof is like the breaking of a potters pot, which is broken without pitie, and in the breaking thereof, there is not found a ſheard to take fire out of the hearth, or to take water out of the pit.* Iſa.30.13.14.

Verſe 2. *When the righteous are in authority the people reioyce: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourne.* See chap. 11. verſ. 10.

3. *Who ſo loueth wiſedome reioyceth his father: but he that keepeth companie with harlots, ſpendeth his ſubſtance.*

WHo ſo loueth wiſedome reioyceth his father,] Maketh his parents glad thereby. See chap. 10. 1. *But he that keepeth companie with harlots, ſpendeth his ſubſtance,* conſumeth all that he hath, and commeth in the end to beggerie. See chap. 5. 9.

The oppoſition is: He that is *wiſe,* and *keepeth good companie,* preſerueth his *ſubſtance,* and *reioyceth* his parents: but he that *keepeth companie with harlots,* conſumeth his ſubſtance, and ſo is a greeſe to his parents.

Verſ. 4. *A King by iudgement eſtabliſheth a land: but he that receiueth gifts ouerthroweth it.*

A Good *King,*] Or ruler, *by iudgement,* by faithfull execution of iudgement to euery one, *eſtabliſheth a land,* confirmeth his dominions in peace and proſperity: for equitie, iuſtice, and good gouernment, is the maine piller, and ſtay of the common good of kingdomes and people: as may well be obſerued in the hiſtories of the Kings of Iudah, that all the while they gaue themſelues to ſet vp true religion, and puniſh ſin, their kingdomes were in ſafety, and they euer got the victorie ouer their enemies: for by this meanes ſpoylers ſhall be ſuppreſſed, the woolues and dogs ſhall bee reſtrained from

worrying the flocke: the hurtfull weedes ſhall be plucked vp from annoying the good hearbes: and Gods bleſſing ſhall be powred downe for protection, peace and plentie: *but he that receiueth gifts*, to peruert iudgment, and is a bribe-taker, *ouerthroweth it*, doth what in him lieth to worke the bane and ruine of the Common-wealth, vndermining the foundations thereof: For the ſinne of briberie and corruption is an abomination to the Lord: and therefore ſuch a tranſgreſſor pulleth downe his iudgements vpon the place where it is committed: by this meanes (no place being left for right, but for gifts) there will be great dangers of mutinies and factions from thoſe malecontented perſons which are grieued with wrongs and iniuſtice: and hereby a window is ſet open for ſuch partialitie, and hope of impunity, that all ſorts of ſinnes, the peſtilence and plagues of Common-wealths, muſt needes increaſe daily, and multiplie exceedingly.

A King which refuſeth *gifts, by iudgement eſtabliſheth a land: but he that receiueth gifts* by iniuſtice, *deſtroyeth it.*

Verſ. 5. *A man that flattereth his neighbour ſpreadeth a net for his feete.*

A *Man that flattereth his neighbour*] Speaking him faire when he ſhould reproue him, and calling euill good in him, *ſpreadeth a net for his feete*, laieth waite to draw him into miſchiefe; either by ſeeking aduantage againſt his ſoule, by poyſoning, and corrupting that with preſumption, pride, and impenitencie: or againſt his eſtate, by ſeeking aduantages to come within him, and to make a prey of him: or againſt his credit, drawing him into obloquie, and cauſing him to be euill ſpoken of, and hee himſelfe is like to be moſt forward in blazing abroad his faults, when he is priuie thereunto: or peraduenture to bring him into danger, for the hazard of his life, when by craftie meanes he hath gotten him into his hand. So that flattering and deceitfull friends be ſecret and hurtful enemies: like fowlers who ſtrew corne, or lay a baite, as it were in good will to giue the hungrie birds meate, when in the

meane time they lay a net, or ſet a grinne to catch them, or ſticke vp lime-twigges to intangle them. Almoſt all the Prophets complaine of theſe treacherous perſons: as *Dauid* doth once, and againe, and many times: and *Micah* ſaith, *They all lie in waite for blood, euery one hunteth his brother with an net*; which is farre more perilous, and whereby they worke greater annoyance, then if they purſued him with a ſword, which would be eaſlier ſeene, feared, and auoided.

Verſ. 6. *In the tranſgreſſion of an euill man, there is a ſnare: but the righteous doth ſing and reioyce.*

IN the tranſgreſſion of an euill man] In the ſinne that an euill man committeth, what contentation, or hope ſoeuer hee hath in it, and though it ſeeme vnto him neuer ſo ſafe and delightfull, yet there *is a ſnare* in it, which God in iuſtice hath laid to keepe him ſure, and to hold him faſt to righteous puniſhment: and the diuell in craft doth lay it to illude and beguile him, and make a prey of him. His lamentable and fearefull caſe in this behalfe, *Bildad* at large deſcribeth, ſaying, *The grinne ſhall take him by the heele, and the robber ſhall preuaile againſt him: the ſnare is laid for him in the ground, and the trap in the way. Terrours ſhall make him afraid on euery ſide, and driue him to his feete. But the righteous ſhall ſing and reioyce*, as the pleaſures, delights, and contentments of the wicked hauing a hooke in them to catch them by the iawes, or elſe a ſnare to intangle their feete, doe turne to their ſorrow and woe in the end: So the teares, and ſighes, the ſorrowes, and afflictions of Gods people in all their painfull, troubleſome, and diſgracefull ſeruices, as the world eſteemeth of them, doe turne vnto their comfort, and ſingular conſolation, as it is here argued by the ſigne or effect of ſinging. Of this change on both ſides the Prophet maketh mention after this ſort, ſaying, *Behold my ſeruants ſhall eate, and ye ſhall be hungrie: my ſeruants ſhall drinke, but yee ſhall be thirſtie: behold my ſeruants ſhall reioyce, but ye ſhall be aſhamed: my ſeruants ſhall ſing for* Iob. 18. 9. 10. 11 Eſai. 26. 13. 14. 15.

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ioy of heart, but ye ſhall howle for ſorrow of heart, and vexation of ſpirit.

The oppoſition is: *In the tranſgreſſion of the wicked there is a ſnare*, and therefore they ſhall mourne and howle: but in the obedience of the righteous there is ſafetie, and therefore they *ſhall reioyce and ſing.*

Verſ.7. *The righteous conſidereth the cauſe of the poore: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.*

THe *righteous conſidereth the cauſe of the poore,*] Doth informe himſelfe by the beſt meanes hee can of the ſtate and equitie thereof, and knowing it, doth approue of it, and himſelfe allowing thereof, doth labour that right alſo according thereto, may be yeelded vnto it: hereof *Iob* propoſeth himſelfe for an example, ſaying, *I was the eyes to the blind, and I was the feete to the lame. I was a father to the poore, and when I knew not the cauſe, I ſought it out diligently. I brake alſo the iawes of the vnrighteous man, and plucked the prey out of his teeth. But the wicked regardeth not to know it*, hee hath no minde to looke into, or defend the cauſe of the poore; willing he is to haue it as little ſifted into, or debated, as may be, and when it is queſtioned and rifled into, he would be glad to ſee little equitie in it, but that his complaints ſhould appeare to be vniuſt clamours, to the end hee might with leſſe diſgrace giue countenance to the poore mans wealthie aduerſarie, and gratifie him by paſſing the ſentence on his ſide.

Verſ.8. *Scornefull men bring a citie into a ſnare: but wiſe men turne away wrath.*

SCornefull *men*] Men deſperate in wickednes, which deride all inſtructions and goodneſſe, ſuch as haue giuen ouer, and ſold themſelues to the practiſe of iniquitie, *bring a citie into a ſnare*, indanger the ſame, and be as it were authors of the ruine of the ſame, (or as the word will well and properly beare it) do

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ſet fire on a citie, or blow it vp: though all of them bee not a- *iaphichh.*
gents in powder plots, yet none of them is free from conſpiracie againſt Prince and people, againſt the publike ſtate of the Common-wealth, and euery perticular mans fortunes, by their crying ſinnes of high contempt of God and religion, and therby incenſing the diſpleaſure of the Lord againſt the whole nation. For ſinfull men be dangerous and hurtfull in all places where they dwell: their counſell is peſtilent: their example is ſcandalous, their abominations doe haſten Gods iudgements vpon al their neighbours: *But righteous men turne away wrath*, pacifie the Lords diſpleaſure, and ſtay the iudgements which are readie to fall, by their prayers and humiliation: by their faithfulnes and obedience: and by their whole intentiue ſtudie and trauell to expell ſinne out of the places where they dwel, and to purge away thoſe prouocations which may draw downe the curſe vpon them, and their neighbours. See chapter 11.12.

The oppoſition is: *Scorneſull men* do kindle Gods wrath, and thereby doe *bring the city in a ſnare*, and expoſe it to deſtruction: *but righteous men do turne away wrath*, and therby deliuer the citie from perill.

Verſ. 9. *If a wiſe man contend with a foole, whether he be angrie, or laugh, there is no reſt.*

IF *a wiſe man*] Indued with vnderſtanding and pietie, *contend with a foole*, with a peruerſe and obſtinate ſinner, conuincing him of his faults, or perſwading him to any good, or in any ſort debate the matter with him contrary to his liking, *whether* the wiſe man *be angrie*, deale roughly or ſharply with him, *or laugh*, vſe more mildnes, or gentlenes in his diſcourſe, *there is no reſt*, hee gaineth no eaſe, or profit by it, the other is ſo incorrigible: For they that loue ſinne, peruert and quarrell at all meanes that ſhould reclaime them from the ſame: For if he be dealt with in good ſadneſſe, earneſtly with a ſterne and auſtere countenance: if waightie reaſons be alleaged, or forcible ſpeeches or perſwaſions be vſed, all this will bee reputed

for

for vncharitablenes, for iudging, for cenſuring, for rigorous vrging of the law: but if hee be intreated with the ſpirit of mildnes, with humble requeſt, with faire ſpeech, with friendly lookes, with all courteous and gently vſage, this maketh him the more inſolent, he thinketh that he is much feared, and they dare not reproue him as a man faultie: if this gentlenes be not this way wreſted, then it carrieth an imputation of diſſimulation and flatterie, that they ſpeake him faire, and fawne vpon him, but loue him not. *Iohn* came mourning, liuing more ſtrictly, and preaching more roundly then ordinarily Chriſt did, and him the froward companie of the Phariſies, and their adherents, accuſed to deale with a wicked ſpirit, and to be poſſeſſed with a diuell. Our Sauiour Chriſt was farre more fociable and affable, hee vſed refreſhings by wine, and meates, after a more liberall manner, and with greater libertie, and his miniſterie was more lightſome and comfortable, and hee was taxed with epicuriſme, and voluptuouſnes, as if he had been a mate both in licentiouſnes, and ſocietie with the worſt.

Verſ. 10. *The bloodthirſtie hate the vpright: but the iuſt ſeeke his ſoule.*

THe *bloodthirſtie*] Cruell men, and ſuch as are miſchieuouſly minded, *hate*, carrie malice in their hearts, and accordingly purſue in their words and actions, him that is *vpright*, euery one which looketh carefully to his ſteps, that hee in good couerſation may pleaſe the Lord, and be profitable to his brethren: for the worſe any man is, the more maleuolent minde he beareth againſt ſuch as are faithfull and godly. It is the note of a damnable and mercileſſe man, to be at deadly enmitie with any one who hath any goodneſſe in him: becauſe the light of the one reproueth the darkneſſe of the other, and the courſe of both their conuerſations is quite contrarie: and therefore *Kain* at the beginning of the world (in a manner) hated *Abel* his owne brother, his onely brother, and that to death. *Eſaus* wickedneſſe in the Scripture offered to our view, in his rancour toward plaine, innocent, and harmeleſſe *Iacob*:

Iacob: Achab profeſſed his hatred toward *Eliah:* and *Saul* declared his in purſuit of *Dauid:* and the enuie of the Scribes and Phariſees toward Chriſt, is ſcarce vnknowne to any. God in his decree hath appointed that it ſhould be ſo, and therefore it cannot be otherwiſe: for Satans brood neuer could, nor euer ſhall beare louing affection to the ſeed of the woman: he that hath a quarrell againſt Chriſt in his Goſpell, will alſo certainly maligne Chriſt in his members, though they were the neereſt, or beſt by kindred or nature vnto him: *but the iuſt*, but the godly, and kind hearted people, whom hee calleth iuſt, becauſe of the fruites of their righteouſneſſe and mercy, *will ſeeke his ſoule*, care greatly to maintaine and defend his life, whereof the bloodie men would ſo faine bereaue him: as *Obadiah* did the Prophets, whom hee hid from the violent and cruell hand of *Achab* and *Iezabel:* and *Abedmelech* in ſpeaking to the King in the behalfe of *Ieremiah*, that he ſhould not bee famiſhed in the priſon. See chap. 24. 11.

Verſ. 11. *A foole vttereth all his mind: but a wiſe man will keepe it in till afterward.*

A Foole vttereth all his mind,] He hath nothing in him but he will eaſily bewray it: for he blazeth abroad his owne ſecrets, yea and his friends counſels, intents, and affaires vnſeaſonably; and therefore hee is heere compared to an vnfrugall houſe-keeper, which lauiſheth out that in a day, which might ſuffice himſelfe and his familie a whole weeke: *but a wiſe man*, he that hath a ſtay of himſelfe, and is endued with diſcretion, *keepeth it in till afterward*, he containeth whatſoeuer he hath in his mind, and reſerueth his ſpeech vnto the fitteſt ſeaſon, that hee may vtter it in time and place moſt commodious. See chap. 14. 33. and 15. 2.

Verſe 12. *Of a ruler that hearkeneth to lies, all his ſeruants are wicked.*

O F a ruler that hearkeneth to lies,] Which admitteth them into his eares, and giueth entertainment to them in his heart,

heart, which is the property of a wicked man, which maketh his mind and senses a sincke, wherinto al the filthy channels do emptie themselues, *all his seruants are wicked*, delighted also to heare lies, and report them, to surfeit with the excesse of leasings, and falshood, and to vomit out the same into their masters bosome: for euill masters be commonly pestred with leaud seruants: as was *Caiphas* the high Priest, whose very maides and wenches were fraught with malice, and readie to picke quarrels whereby to intangle the Disciples of our Sauiour. And this commeth to passe, because Gods iudgement is vpon them, to plague them with illuders: as *Achab* was with the false Prophets: and their owne choyce is of such as will humour them, and serue their turnes.

Vers. 13. *The poore and the vsurer meet together, and the Lord lighteneth both their eyes.*

THe poore and the vsurer,] The needie and wealthie (hee doth by a Periphrasis call rich men vsurers, because commonly vsurers are rich men, and many rich men get their goods by vsurie, or other indirect courses; or hauing by better meanes gotten a stocke, doe afterwards let out the same for vse and interest. The words be indifferently translated, men of vsuries, or men of deceits.) *Meet together*, either in companie, or in state; the poore growing to wealth, and so is made the rich mans equall, or superiour; or the rich falling into decay, and so is become the poore mans companion or inferiour: as trauellers comming from diuers, and somtimes contrarie waies, doe meet the one with the other in their passage, or arriue at the same place. The same simile is pointed at in the same word, though for a different purpose, Psalm. 85. 10. 11. There is a meeting also of ballances, when the higher scale is made heauier, and sinketh downeward, and the lower becommeth lighter, and riseth vpward, vntill there bee euen waight: let the reader consider which of the comparisons is the more fit. *The Lord lighteneth both their eyes*, giueth each of them their life, and their being, and vse of senses, both of seeing, which

aish tocacim.

Cheſed veemeth niphgaſhu.

which is periphraſtically deſcribed by the illumination of their eyes, and of hearing, taſting, &c. The illumination of the eyes is ſo taken in other texts of Scripture: as in the firſt chapter of *Iohn*, and the eighth verſe: *In it* (meaning in Chriſt) *was life and the life was the light of men:* and in the ninth verſe: *this was the true light that lighteneth every one that commeth into the world:* and the prophet praying for defence againſt his enemies, that his life might be protected, and not taken away by their violence, entreateth the Lord to *lighten his eyes that he ſleepe not in death:* the ſenſe then is altogether one, or little different from that ſentence which wee haue expounded in another place: *the rich and the poore meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them both.* And tendeth to this purpoſe, that albeit an outward eſtate doe make an imparitie betweene one and another amongſt men, yet ſo it doth not before the Lord: hee createth all; hee giueth and preſerueth life to all; hee beſtoweth the benefit of ſenſes vpon all: the abundance of the rich communicateth not this, nor the ſcarcity of the poore depriueth him of it. Pſal. 13 3.

Verſ. 14. *The King that iudgeth the poore in truth, his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for euer.*

THE King,] Euery Magiſtrate: but he nameth him, becauſe he is chiefe, and others are without thrones, wherewith he is dignified, *that iudgeth the poore in truth,* that defendeth a poore man in a iuſt cauſe: (for the Lord eſpecially reſpected the poore in the vſe of magiſtracie, as hee commandeth in the Pſalme, *Doe right to the poore and fatherleſſe, doe iuſtice to the poore and needie. Deliuer the poore and needie, ſaue them from the hand of the wicked:* becauſe theſe are weake, and ſubiect to many dangers, and farre vnable to reſiſt the violence of the mighty.) *his throne ſhall bee eſtabliſhed for euer,* his kingdome, gouernment, and proſperous ſtate ſhall continue. See chap. 16. 12. and 20. 28. Pſal. 82. 34.

Verſ. 15.

Verſ. 15. *The rod and reproofe giue wiſedome: but a child left to himſelfe, maketh his mother aſhamed.*

THE *rod*,] Stripes, or corrections giuen by the hand vnto a child, when need and occaſion requireth it, and *reproofe*, that is, a rebuke giuen by word, ſometimes threatning, or any kind of ſharpe ſpeeches, *giueth wiſedome*, are inſtruments and meanes to make him wiſe, by terrifying him from his faults, and cauſing him to looke better to his waies for feare of blame, and ſmart of puniſhment. See chap. 22. 15. *but a child left to himſelfe*, to follow his owne will, and doe what he luſteth without reſtraint, being neither chaſtened with the rod, nor controled with words, but fondly cockered and born with in all faults: as *Adoniah* was by *Dauid*: *ſhameth his mother*, is a greeſe and reproch to both his parents, but eſpecially to his mother, whom more audaciouſly hee contemneth: and becauſe ſhee is commonly more acceſſarie to his diſſolute behauiour then the father, who can hardly abide that her darling, in his tender age, ſhould bee roughly ſpoken vnto, or ſharpely dealt withall. See chap. 15. 20.

The oppoſition is: *The rod and reproofe giue wiſedome*, and therefore a child well nurtured, and duly kept vnder, is an honour and credit to his parents: but neglect of the rod and rebuke doe nouriſh follie; and therefore *a child left to himſelfe*, doth miniſter greeſe to both his parents, but ſpecially hee maketh his mother aſhamed.

Verſe 16. *When the wicked are multiplied, tranſgreſſion is encreaſed: but the righteous ſhall ſee their fall.*

WHEN *the wicked are multiplied*,] Either in number, but ſpecially in their eſtate, *tranſgreſſion encreaſeth*, they are the more rebellious, and ſinne with greater audacioufnes, and preſumption: as the prophet ſaith; *As they were encreaſed, ſo they ſinned againſt me; therefore I will turne their glory into ſhame.* And therefore *Moſes* doth liuely deſcribe the ve-

Hoſ. 4. 7.

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nome of vnſanctified proſperity, which maketh men fierce againſt God himſelfe, who iadiſhly like thankleſſe beaſts doe winſe, and ſpurne at him with their heeles. *But Ieſhurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art growne thicke,* Deut. 32. 15. *thou art couered with fatneſſe: then he forſooke God which made him, and lightly eſteemed of the rocke of his ſaluation.* Their pride which alwaies groweth as faſt as their fortunes, is a principall cauſe of their contempt: and their power ſerueth them to beare out all matters without puniſhment, or reſiſtance: when they were fewer, and had leſſe, they were as tender prickles; but now by growth, and encreaſe of ſap, they are become brambles, and ſharpe thornes; now they can doe miſchiefe by force and violence: now they can preuaile with others to bee like vnto themſelues, by perſwaſions, by counſels, by countenance, by impunitie, and by protection: *but the righteous ſhall ſee their fall*, their deſtruction and ouerthrow: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, the number, the greatneſſe, and the ſinfulnes of theſe wicked miſcreants, is vndoubtedly a trouble, and feare to the righteous: but let them not be diſcouraged, they ſhall as well ſee them come downe, as they did to riſe vp: for neither might, nor multitude will keepe ſinners from deſtruction: for though a tree haue many branches, and great bowes, and ſtrong armes, yet it is not defended thereby from the axe, or blaſts of the wind; and therefore God will haue his people ſee their ruine; as ſometimes they ſaw the Egyptians drowned, or *Haman* hanged: becauſe they ſhould partake of comfort after many ſorrowes, and yeeld vnto him the honour of his truth, when they behold the performance of his promiſe, and the efficacie of his prouidence: and thereby the ruine of impious perſons is made the more bitter and burthenſome vnto them, when they ſhall ſee them to bee ſpectators of their miſerie, whoſe fall they hoped for, and whoſe happineſſe they maligned.

Verſ.17. *Correct thy ſonne and he ſhall giue thee reſt, yea hee ſhall giue delight to thy ſoule.*

CORRECT thy ſonne,] Admoniſh thy child, either ſonne or daughter, by rebukes and checkes, or (if need require) ſmite them with the rod or wand, according to the quality of the fault, and the yeeres and ſtature of thy child, *and hee ſhall giue thee reſt:* wheras before his misbehauiour and euill manners did trouble and diſquiet thee, now his reformation and amendment ſhall put an end to thy griefe, and feares, and refreſh thee after thy teares and ſorrow for him, if God adde his bleſſing to thine endeauours: and this is the beſt meanes that can bee vſed, euen his owne ordinance for that purpoſe: for nurtured children, whoſe hearts God doth ſmite with humiliation for their faults, as parents ſmite their backe with the rod, or their eares with reproofes, doe (as it were) bring a cheere of quietneſſe vnto them, after their dread and paines: they ſhall need to take no thought for them after grace is wrought in their hearts, they may ſleepe quietly vpon their beds, and put away all diſtruſtfull cogitations, *and he ſhall giue delight to thy ſoule*, his ingenuitie, towardneſſe, and vertuous diſpoſition will affect thine heart, and cheere vp thy ſpirits, for that his goodneſſe which thou doſt preſently obſerue, and that future happineſſe which thou doſt foreſee to remaine for him: for euen as a ground well tilled, or dreſſed, or trees well pruned, or looked vnto, bring forth to the husbandman ſweet flowers, good commodities, and delectable fruits: ſo the well gouerned child will vtter ſuch gratious ſpeeches, ſhew himſelfe ſo obſequious, and tractable to all good inſtructions, and euery way conforme himſelfe to the contentation of his parents, that their ſoule ſhall haue great delight and comfort in him.

Verſ.18.

Verse 18. *Where there is no vision the people perish: but they that keepe the law are blessed.*

WHere there is no vision] Where there is no wholesome, and sincere preaching of Gods doctrine out of his word: (for the message of the Prophets was wont to be called a *vision*, and the Prophets themselues called *seers*;) *the people perish*, are exposed to the greatest euils that can be, both of soule and body: as to infidelitie; to ignorance; to the motions of Satan, whereby they are drawen into iniquitie at his pleasure, to the damnable lust, and affections of their owne hearts, to impenitencie and hardnes of heart, to the wrath of God, and to the hazard of endles damnation. In the Hebrew text it is said they are *made naked*, as souldiers among the shot and weapons of their enemies, without armour on their backes, (in which sense it is said that *Saul prophecied all day naked*) or to people stript of their garments, whereby it commeth to passe, that they are starued with cold in the time of winter, or tosted with heate in the sommer, and are made an obiect of shame and contempt to all that looke vpon them. Now the *vision* is said *not to be*, when God hath shut vp the eyes of them that ought to be teachers, that the Scriptures are as a *clasped booke, or sealed letter* which cannot be read, and therefore no sound doctrine is taught by them at all: but there is a woefull famine of the word of God. And the *vision* is said *not to be* when the word is sometimes expounded, but not sincerely, faithfully, and diligently, so that the people may be *as sheepe without a shepheard*, in the middest of great plenty of such as take vpon them to bee teachers: *but they that keepe the law*, which conscionably, and constantly addresse themselues to retaine that which they heare, to beleeue that which is testified, and to obey that which is commanded, *are blessed*, as elated in the promises of God, as inheritors of euerlasting glory, and present possessors of Gods mercies and fauours, as being secured from the perrill of euery thing that is against them, and assured of the supplie of all things which will doe them good.

Isai.1 1. 1.Sam.3.2.& 9. 9.

1.Sam.19.24.

Isa.29.9.

Amos 8.11.

Mat.9.36.

this is blessednes, and these are men that doe partake of it: for diuers heare the word but it is to their condemnation, and therefore the outward ioyning of the exercises of religion maketh not any happy, vnlesse they haue also their portion in the power thereof by the spirit of God, and be transformed into the image of Christ.

Thus the opposition is: *Where the vision faileth the people perish*, and cursed is he that hauing the law doth not obey it: but where *the vision is* the people may be saued, and blessed is he that keepeth the law.

Verse 19. *A seruant will not be corrected by words: for though he vnderstand he will not answere.*

A *Seruant*] An inferiour, of seruile disposition, a froward and stubborne person, *will not be corrected with words*, bare words without strokes, or other punishment, will not suffice to reforme him, *though he vnderstand*, notwithstanding he apprehend what thou meanest, *yet he will not answere*, either when he is commanded ought, he pretendeth that he heareth not what is said vnto him: or when a question is asked of him, he will stand mute, and hold his peace, out of a curst stomacke: or though he heare, and speake, and promise that he will doe all which is giuen in charge, yet he answereth not in this sense, because he putteth not in practise. Such stubborne obstinate persons adde to their owne miserie, and bring burdens vpon their owne backes, which they might be freed from.

Verse 20. *Seest thou a man hastie in his matters, there is more hope of a foole then of him.*

SEest *thou a man hastie in his matters*] One that is carried headlong without aduice, or circumspection, for the attempting, or managing of his affaires, marke him well, take good notice both of him, and his successes, *there is more hope of a foole, then of him*, a naturall, and one whom God hath depraued of the facultie, and benefit of vnderstanding, and discretion:

cretion: the cause of this temeritie and rashnes is an ouerweaning conceit of his owne wisedome: and therefore this sentence little differeth in sense from the twelfth verse of the 26. Chapter

Vers. 21. *He that delicately bringeth vp his seruant from a childe, shall haue him become as his sonne at length.*

HE *that delicately bringeth vp his seruant*] Which make too much of an vnworthie seruant, by lifting him vp to offices, whereof hee is incapable, and altogether vnfit for the place: or cloatheth him with apparell too fine for his degree: or feedeth him too daintily to the nourishment of his lusts: or giueth him too large allowance for his expenses: or suffereth him to take too much ease: or vseth him with ouer great familiaritie, *from his youth*, from his first beginning a long season after, that doth not in time take him downe, and make him learne to know himselfe better, *shall haue him become as his sonne at length*, at length hee will take state vpon him, and become a young master in the house, after an insolent and arrogant manner, as if al these fauours were due vnto him of right: so vngratefull he will be vnto his master, as that he will thinke him bound to preferre him; and so imperious ouer his fellowes, as that hee will thinke hee may domineere ouer them; and so malapert to the children of the familie, as that hee will make himselfe to be their equall: For the more kindly wicked men be dealt with, the more vnthankfull and inhumane they shew themselues.

Verse 22. *An angrie man stirreth vp strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*

AN *angrie man stirreth vp strife.* See cap. 15. 18. *and a furious man* which suffereth himself to be transported with rage & indignation, which is wedded to his passiō, as a man is to his wife: (for so much may the originall word import) *abagnal chebaundeth in transgression*, being inflamed with wrath, hee not only breedeth contention, but bringeth foorth an number of *mah.*

sinnes of sundrie sorts: he curseth, he sweareth, he reuileth, he slandereth, he enuieth, he murmureth, he fighteth, and is readie also to commit murther, and many in that moode spare not to shed blood, and lay violent hands vpon those whom they deale with.

Verse 23. *A mans pride shall bring him low: but honour shall vphold the humble in spirit.*

A *Mans pride*] Either lurking in his heart, or expressed by word, deede, countenance, apparell, and such like, *shall bring him low*, shall be a cause of his abiection and debasement, where he was before of higher estate and great estimation: *but honour shall vphold the humble in spirit*, good esteeme, and credit, due praise and commendation, good plentie, and sufficiencie of maintenance, and (if it behooffull for him, and may stand him in stead) offices, dignities, and meete preferments, *shall vphold*, raise vp, and keepe vp *the humble in spirit*, such as are of lowly mind, and seeke least after either praise or promotion. See chap. 11.12. and 15.33. and 18.12.

Vers. 24. *Who so is partner with a theefe, hateth his owne soule, and which heareth cursing, and bewraieth not.*

WHo so is partner with a theefe,] Which maketh himself accessary vnto his stealth, or robbery, either by counsell, or consent: or by receiuing of stolne goods: or by concealing of those whom he knoweth to be offenders in this sin, *hateth his owne soule*, dealeth as euill with himselfe, as if hee had a quarrell against his owne life and welfare, by making himselfe subiect to danger of law, to infamie, and to the displeasure and curse of God, in as much as theeues and robbers shall not inherit the kingdome of God. And the Prophet proueth the dissembling Israelites to be liable to such a sentence, as should be denounced vpon them at the iudgement seate of God, and accordingly executed: because when they *saw a theefe they consented with him. And he which heareth cursing,* Psal. 50.18.

and

and bewraieth it not, in the like caſe is he, and an enemie alſo vnto his owne ſoule, *which heareth curſing*, in whoſe eares blaſphemies, ſwearing, bitter, malitious, or any manner of inormous ſpeeches are vttered, and hee declareth it not, neither reproueth the partie ſo faultie, although hee be ſuch a one whom it is wiſedome to admoniſh, and it well becommeth him ſo to do, neither informeth any other who may be a Phyſitian to the partie delinquent, and miniſter medicines vnto him to cure his ſoule. And therefore after this manner the Lord doth cenſure this ſinne in the law: *If any ſoule heare the voyce of ſwearing, and is a witnes whether he hath ſeene it, or knowne of it, and doe not vtter it, he ſhall beare his iniquitie.* Leuit. 5. 1. Silence then kept in ſuch caſes cauſeth men to incurre the recompence that is due to other mens offences, as themſelues by bearing with them, and winking at them, haue intangled themſelues with the guiltines thereof, and ſo make themſelues obnoxious vnto them.

Verſ. 25. *The feare of a man bringeth him into a ſnare: but he that truſteth in the Lord ſhall be ſafe.*

THE *feare of a man*] Not the ſpirituall feare, and ſonnelike reuerence of God with dread to doe ought that may diſpleaſe him: For *happie is he that feareth alway*: nor the naturall feare of dangers and troubles, ſo long as it keepeth in compaſſe, and is ſanctified by the ſpirit of God: but that ſlauiſh and cowardly feare, that daſterlines of heart which ſpringeth from infidelitie, and either detaineth a man from performing his dutie, and thruſteth him on forwards, to the doing of that which is vnlawfull, *bringeth him into a ſnare*, into great perplexities, and diſtreſſes, and ſometimes into great dangers and miſchiefes: for the want of Chriſtian fortitude is both ſinfull, and hurtfull. This complaint doth *Ieremiah* make of the impious caitifes of his time, *They bend their tongues like a bow for lies, but haue no courage for the truth.* Iere. 9. 3. When *Abraham* and *Iſaack* began to bee ſurpriſed with this, their feete were preſently in the ſnare, by diſclaiming their owne wiues, and after

a sort prostituting them, or at least exposing them to the vnchast eyes and powers of heathen Princes. And in what a plight was *Dauid* at Gath when hee was ouertaken with it, who vpon two much timiditie, and distrust of Gods protection, auoided the land of Israel, and cast himselfe into the Philistims hands, among whom hee was brought into miserable streights, being driuen to counterfeite madnes, and to play the part of a lunatick and frenticke person, as if hee had been quite besides himselfe? And *Peters* example was memorable, who letting his courage to fall from him, and searefulnes to possesse him, was well neere vanquished by feeble souldiers, the porters at gates, and base persons, a woman, a girle, a contemptible wench, made him to yeeld vp his weapons, and to yeeld himselfe (as it were) captiue into their hands, they compelled him to lye, to sweare, to forsweare, and to abiure his own master, whō not many houres before he promised boastingly to die with. *But he that trusteth in the Lord*, the person which is secure of the good will of God, which constantly suffereth afflictions, and as a valiant souldier of Iesus Christ proceedeth in well doing, *shall be safe*, and sure vnder the Lords defence: he will be as an high rocke vnto him, and for a tower and castle, so that nothing shall touch such a one to doe him hurt.

The opposition standeth thus: *A mans feare doth bring him into a snare*, and hee that hath not his confidence in God shall be in danger: but the boldnes of a man doth preserue his libertie, *and he that trusteth in the Lord shall be safe.*

Vers. 26. *Many seeke the fauour of a ruler: but euery mans iudgement is from the Lord.*

MAny seeke the fauour of a ruler.] Many imploy all their friends, and vse all possible meanes to haue the Magistrate made for them in their suites and questions. See chap. 19.6. *But euery mans iudgement*, the sentence which the Magistrate shall passe vpon euery mans cause, whether it bee to cleere him, or to cast him, *is of the Lord*, who hath decreed what

what successe euery man shall finde, and directeth the Magistrates mouth to pronounce the sentence, which his prouidence hath appointed to bee giuen: and howsoeuer man may be corrupt in acting of that which he hath determined; yet his proceeding is absolutely iust and righteous. *Pilate* condemning Christ to death, passed as wrongfull a sentence as euer proceeded out of mans mouth; and yet our Sauiour told him, whatsoeuer he should be able to doe against him was assigned him from aboue, and the Lord had fore appointed it.

Vers. 27. *The vniust man is an abomination to the iust, and he that is vpright is an abomination to the wicked.*

THe vniust man is an abomination to the iust] The iust doth iustly abhorre the vngodly, not in respect of their persons, but for, and according to their deserts: because they are Gods enemies, & aduersaries both to their soules, and to the whole Church, and bring plagues and iudgements vpon the whole nation: and what fellowship can there bee betweene righteousnes and vnrighteousnes? or of the seede of the woman with the seede of the serpent? On the contrarie side, *he that is vpright*, that leadeth an vpright and holy life, *is an abomination to the wicked*, hated of him with great detestation, but vniustly, and without all desert: for there is cause rather of loue, and kinde affection. But hence ariseth the quarrell, that the vpright mans workes are good, and his euill: and because the vpright man will not runne to the same excesse of riot with him: and because hee will either actually or vocally reproue his sinnes: and because his heart is affrighted, and terrified with the presence and companie of the vpright: and because the vpright and godly man is not of this world. See the tenth verse of this Chapter. Psal. 139. 21. Ioh. 15. 19.

CHAP.

CHAPTER. XXX.

Verse 1. *The words of Agur the sonne of Iaketh, euen the prophecie the man spake concerning Ithiel, euen Ithiel and Vcal.*

THe sentences of *Salomon* were determined, and ended in the former Chapter: vnto which are adioined the writings and sayings of two other holy persons inspired by the holy Ghost, and vnited in one volume with them: namely *Agur*, to whom this Chapter is ascribed, and *Bathsheba Salomons* mother, which vttered the words of the next, in this present chapter: first the Scribe, penman, or author thereof vnder God is described: secondly the matter of it is propounded: the penman is described onely by his name and relation, hee was *Agur* the sonne of *Iaketh*. The matter is proposed first more generally being termed *words*: secondly more specially it is called a *prophecie*, that is, sacred words, holy sayings, such as Gods owne spirit did dictate, which proceedeth not from his owne wit, wisedome, nor learning, or any priuate motion of his owne, but as hee was directed by the holy Ghost: and thirdly, more particularly in the seuerall points and branches of the same, and those bee of three sorts: whereof some are euangelicall doctrines touching saluation, to the seuenth verse: some are requests to God in way of prayer, to the tenth verse: and some are promiscuous sentences, as precepts, complaints, threatnings, and parables touching many matters. Now touching saluation, and the spirituall life: in the first place hee declareth the author, worker, and foundation of it Christ, to the fifth verse: in the next hee sheweth the meanes wherby the same is to be attained vnto, in the 5. and 6. verses. *Concerning Ithiel*, our Sauiour Christ is here set forth vnto vs, first by the vnion of his natures, that being eternall, & mightie God with his Father, hee is also man with vs. For *Ithiel* is equiualent

equiualent to *Immanuel*, ſauing this that *Immanuel* ſignifieth *God with vs*, and *Ithiel* by a neerer application, *God with me*: and the ſame word doth alſo argue his attribute of goodnes, his gracious preſence, according to the ordinarie phraſe of the Scripture: as was the conference betweene *Gideon* and the Angell, *The Lord is with thee thou valiant man* (ſaith the one) Iudg 6.12.13. *If the Lord be with vs, why is all this come vpon vs?* (ſaith the other) *Feare not* (ſaith the Lord to his Iſrael by the Prophet) Iſai.43.5. *for I am with thee*. And after that by his omnipotencie and power, which is the meaning of the word *Veal*, although notwithſtanding both *Ithiel* and it doe ſomewhat varie from the common forme of words of their compoſition, and deriuation: For it pleaſeth the wiſedome of God in this place to vſe them after a ſingular manner, and fitteth them for the repreſentation of his ſonne, as if they were his proper names.

Verſ. 2. *Surely I haue been brutiſh ſince I was a man, neither is there the vnderſtanding in me that was in Adam.*

Verſ. 3. *I neither learned wiſedom, nor knowne the knowledge of holy things.*

HAuing magnified the competencie and all-ſufficiencie of Chriſt to be a Sauiour, in reſpect of his natures as well diuine as humane, and of his goodneſſe, preſence with his, and infinite power, hee commeth to take knowledge of himſelfe, and of his owne inſufficiencie, and propoſeth himſelfe therein as a paterne to all mankinde, of the great defacement of Gods image in him, and of diſabilitie by any wiſedome of his owne, to compaſſe his owne ſaluation: to the end that it might appeare what need and vſe he hath of a Mediatour: *Surely I haue been brutiſh ſince I was a man*: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, It is a thing very certaine, and neceſſarie to bee knowne and obſerued, that I, and all men *are beaſts by our owne knowledge*, and in Iere.10.14. this ſtate haue I ſtood at euer ſince I was conceiued, and euery mans elſe ſince *Adams* fall, in reſpect of our fleſhly condition, and corporall generation, *neither is there the vnderſtanding in me that was in Adam*, that depth of rare knowledge, and admirable

mirable wiſedome which was in *Adam* in the ſtate of innocencie, and before hee tranſgreſſed the holy commandement of God, and was neuer ſince found either in himſelfe, or in any of his poſteritie: *neither haue I learned wiſedome*, that heauenly and celeſtiall wiſedome from any of the wiſe or prudent men of this world: for it is hidden from them all, *nor knowne the knowledge of holy things*, I haue not by mine owne wit, by the light of reaſon, or by any naturall faculties of my minde pierced into the deep myſterie of ſanctified and ſauing knowledge: For indeed fleſh and blood reueileth not Chriſt to any man: but the ſpirit of God onely working by his word.

Verſ.4. *Who hath aſcended vp into heauen? who hath gathered the winde in his fiſts? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath eſtabliſhed all the ends of the earth? what is his name, or his ſonnes name, if thou canſt tell me?*

HE proceedeth ſtill to debaſe himſelfe, and all the world beſides, both for ignorance and debilitie, and maketh therein a compariſon betweene God and man, detracting from the one, and aſcribing to the other the glorie and praiſe of ſupernall matters, and this hee doth by way of challenge: *Who* (ſaith he) *hath aſcended into heauen?* beſide him that is *Ithiel*, and *Vcal*, that he ſhould be there informed in the ſecret of Gods will, *or deſcended?* that he might tell vs what things
Deut.13.12. he hath ſeene, or heard: in this ſenſe our Sauiour ſaith, *no man hath aſcended into heauen, but he that hath deſcended from it, the ſonne of man which is in heauen.* True it is that *Paul*, and other haue been *wrapt* vp thither, but yet not of themſelues, but by God, and withall the things which they ſaw were vnutterable. *Who hath gathered the winde in his fiſts?* who doth hold the wind in his hand that it blow not, and letteth it looſe when hee will to breathe out ſtrong and violent blaſts, *who hath bound the waters in a garment?* As if hee ſhould ſay, Is it not God onely which keepeth the waters in the cloudes, and hath incloſed them in an narrow compaſſe, as it were wrapt vp in a veſture, which hee may fold vp, or let out at his owne pleaſure?

pleasure? for doth it belong to man to appoint drought, or moisture, to build vp the clowdes, or dissolue them into raine? *who hath established the ends of the earth?* by whose appointment is it, that the earth, and all the coasts thereof remaine so firme, and stable, is it by the vertue of mans hand or commandement? *what is his name?* canst thou name a man that can performe these things? *what is his sonnes name?* he speaketh this according to the custome of the Iewes, who vsed to make men knowne according to their kindred: as *Isaiah the sonne of Amos*: *Dauid the sonne of Ishai*; so also *Asa his sonne, Iehoshapat his sonne, Iehoram his sonne*, name his sonne, meaning that there is not a man to be found in any familie, or kindred of the world, that is able to performe these things: and all these latter demands are brought in for amplifications of the first question, and that by a most elegant gradation, for the erecting of mans imbecilitie: as if he should haue said, Is man able to mount vp into heauen, to be a companion of God in his counsels? nay he is not able so much as to gouerne the windes in the aire: nor to order the waters in the lowest clowdes: nor to adde the least stabilitie to the earth, which we tread vpon; and therefore both I, and all that will attaine vnto blessednes, must goe out of our selues, and seeke our helpe in *Ithiel* and *Ucal*, being that sonne of God whom no man knoweth but the father, neither doth any man know the father but he alone, and to whom he will reueile him, he is the true Messiah. Matth. 11. 26.

Verse 5. *Euery word of God is pure, he is a shield to them that trust in him.*

THe meanes whereby saluation is to be obtained, and which confirme a man in the assured hope thereof, are three: the first is the most perfect and absolute word of God, in the former clause of this verse: the second is faith, affiance in God, and dependance vpon him, in the latter clause of this verse: the third is the conscience, and most dutifull regard of Gods holy vowes, that is be faithfully obserued without our

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owne mixtures with it, in the next verse: *Euery word of God is pure*, euery part and particle of Gods reuelled will *is pure*, true, iust, holie, and free from all corruption, and basenes, as the siluer that hath bin many times refined in the fire; this is that word of grace, of that message of saluation, whereby Christ doth exercise his goodnes towards vs, and maketh his power effectuall in vs, *he is a shield to them that trust in him*, to the faith which he requireth, he perswadeth vs by a forcible cause, the prouident care of God for the saluation, and safetie of his people, which he illustrateth by a comparison of bodily armes of defence, and therefore he is called a *shield*, or buckler, which a man holdeth out against the weapons of his enemies, and receiueth the arrowes, the strokes, the darts, the bullets, the shot, which otherwise would pierce the body, slay, or wound it: and therefore a good man can neuer be hurt by the diuell, and his souldiers, so long as the Lord is not battered nor pierced: if he be impregnable, they are in safetie: if he be inuincible, they can neuer bee destroyed. The subiects of this protection, the persons preserued by him, are those that cast themselues vpon him, and stedfastly repose their confidence in him. See Chap.29.25.

Verse 6. *Adde not to his words lest he reproue thee, and thou be found a liar.*

ADde not to his words] Neither vtter, nor practise any thing against the will of God reuealed to thee, by equallizing mens words with it: and dignifying the fruites of humane wit with the titles, and prerogatiues that peculiarly appertaine to Gods wisdome; by canonizing mens writings, and so making them matchable with Gods holie bookes: by forging of things which God neuer spake, or by misinterpreting, or misapplying that which he hath deliuered: by falsifying the meaning, and giuing a sense which he intended not: especially to take liberty to sinne, or thereby doe any thing that is vnlawfull. The reason whereby he deterreth men from this presumption, is, from the perill which will ensue vpon it, &

that

that in a double reſpect: the one they expoſe themſelues vnto rebuke; doe not this *leſt he reprone thee*, as charging thee with arrogancy and great preſumption: and the other that they bewray their owne falſhood, *leſt* (ſaith he) *thou be found a lyar*, in affirming that which is void of truth, and egregiouſly contrary vnto it, and ſo ſhalt thou haue the true God to diſcouer thy lies, and with iudgements vpon thee (to thy confuſion,) auerre and iuſtifie his owne diuine veritie: and the ſame is the condition of theſe, which contrarily diminiſh any part of Gods word, and attempt to take away ought from that which he hath ſpoken, or written, againſt his precept, and ſtrict charge, *Whatſoeuer I command you take heede to doe it, thou ſhalt put nothing thereto, nor take ought therefrom.* Deut. 12. 32.

Verſe 7. *Two things haue I required of thee, deny them me not before I dye.*

THis prayer of *Agur*, though it be briefe, conſiſteth yet of three parts, as we ſhall ſee in order; the firſt is a preface and entrance thereunto: *Two things haue I required of thee*, wherein this holy man of God in humble manner ſheweth vnto him, that he earneſtly deſireth at his hands two things eſpecially, as moſt needfull for the ſaluation of his ſoule, the diſcharge of his dutie, and good eſtate in this life: for although he begged many other things at Gods hand; yet hee did frequently, and feruently craue theſe two as matters of great importance, and ſuch as made a way for innumerable other particulars, and theſe hee deſireth to obtaine, and inioy *before* he *dye*, during his life, and euen vntill his laſt breath; this he doth, for that he well knew, and conſidered if God ſhould withdraw his fauour and grace from him but for a moment, his eſtate would be very miſerable.

Verſ. 8.

Verse 8. *Remoue from me vanity and lies, giue me neither pouertie nor riches, feed me with food conuenient for me.*

THe second part of this prayer standeth in the suite that he maketh, the petitions that he putteth vp to God, and the principall things which he supplicateth for: whereof some of them concerne the soule, as grace against his sinnes: and some the body, as moderate maintenance for his estate, *Remoue far from me* (saith he) *vanitie, and lies*, that is to say, keepe me by thy holie spirit from all vngodlines, and vnrighteousnes, which is *vanity*, and especially from hypocrisie, and telling of vntruth, which is a double iniquitie: those of this kind which I haue formerly fallen into, remit, and pardon, and for the future dayes of my life, protect, and defend me against the dominion, power, and venome of them, and cause that so oft as I fault, I may be purged from them by sound and hartie repentance. This his request is very much agreeable to those petitions which our Sauiour hath taught vs to make: *Forgiue vs our trespasses: leade vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill. Giue me neither pouerty, nor riches*, after spirituall graces hee craueth corporall blessings, desiring a mediocritie therein, euen so much as is needfull, meete, and vsefull for him; and therefore maketh a dreprecation against extremities, ouer little, or excessiue much, *giue me neither pouertie nor riches*, suffer me not to be oppressed with penury, neither yet to carrie too heauie a burden of prosperitie: let me not sinke into indigency, and so be made miserable with want, neither let me ouerflow with too luxurious an estate, and so be corrupted with superfluitie, *feed me with food conuenient for me*, that is to say, bestow vpon me that portion which thou as my heauenly father hast cut out for me, and appointed in thy decree to be conuenient for my body, and for my soule, and no hinderance, but a furtherance to me in thy seruice. It is more forcibly propounded in the originall text, then doth appeare in the translation; for the Lord therein with his administration, and prouidence is compared to the dammes of yong creatures, whose care to bring

bring meate, (or as the word signifyeth) a *pray* vnto them, *Hatripheni* constantly, and without any defeatement of them: and this is *lechem* better, then to haue their nests, or holes full of meate, lying *chukki.* vnnecessarily by them: and likewise he is resembled to wise, faithfull, and iust masters, and Captaines, which yeeld a set allowance, or ordinary vnto their people, or souldiers, which shall be very sufficient for them, and which they may vndoubtedly conclude to haue ministred to them in due time, without any fayling, and therefore they are in better case, then if it lay moulding, or corrupting by them many moneths before they need it, and should be amongst their carriages, wherewith they should weary themselues in their oft remoueals from one place or countrie to another. And this is all one in sense with that other petition in the Lords prayer, *giue vs this day our daily bread*, and it hath also the same extent that that hath, containing vnder *bread or food* all corporall blessings, or whatsoeuer things be expedient for a mans welfare touching this life.

Verse 9. *Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord: or lest I be poore and steale, and take the name of my God in vaine.*

THe third is a confirmation of his petition, which he made for competencie, without those extremities and the noysome effects that will insue from either of them, and that is on the one side impious, and execrable contempt of God, and on the other side, sinful, scandelous, and offensiue shifting, *lest I be full*, exceed in riches, or be too highly aduanced to honour and promotion, or haue more then enough of the outward things, which the world doth so much admire, *and deny thee*, to take authority, or beare rule ouer me, or to giue precepts for my wayes: especially when thy word prescribeth ought against my carnall lusts, and fleshly will, and say, by the contemptuous thought of my heart within my selfe, or by blasphemous speeches to others, or by the consequence of my dissolute, irregular, or presumptuous behauiour, *who is the Lord?* that I

ſhould feare him, that I ſhould obey him, that I ſhould refraine from mine owne pleaſing, and ſweete delights, to doe him ſeruice: for fulnes is very infeſtuous to religion, and to humilitie, and to a chriſtian conuerſation, euen in Gods owne
Deut. 8.12.13. people, ſaying, *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God,*
14. *not keeping his commandements, nor his lawes, which I command thee this day: leſt when thou haſt eaten, and filled thy ſelfe, and ſhalt build goodly houſes, and dwell therein, and thy beaſts and thy ſheepe be increaſed, thine heart be lifted vp, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage. Or leſt I be poore and ſteale, and take the name of my God in vaine*, leſt famine, and pinching neceſſity do draw me firſt vnto theft, and afterward into penury, diſhonouring thee by my fraudulent and vnconſcionable chetings, or other vnrighteous courſes.

Verſe 10. *Accuſe not a ſeruant to his maſter, leſt he curſe thee and thou be found guilty.*

Accuſe not a ſeruant to his maſter] Complaine not falſly or raſhly without cauſe, or neceſſitie, if eaſier meanes may ſerue to reclaime, and reforme him, though he ſhould be faultie: for it is a worke of cruelty to inbitter gouernours againſt their vnderlings: it is as vnfit for a good man ſo to doe, as it misbeſeemeth him that is mercifull to play the prankes of a falſe and malitious *Doeg*: and who would deale like that whoriſh miſtres of *Ioſeph*, to expoſe a harmeleſſe lambe to the pawes of a roaring Lyon? For ſuch a one ſhe attempted to make *Potiphar* to be, by kindling in him the rage of ielouſie, by her falſe ſuggeſtions, and helliſh calumniations. The enemies of *Shadrach*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*, are perpetually infamous by this kind of treacherous fycophancie: and when will the reproch of that curſed *Haman* come to an end, who by his virulent tongue traduced a whole nation, and the beſt nation of all the Kings ſubiects, inueighed *Aſſuerus* to preſcribe them all, and deſtinate them to a bloody maſſacre? If it be ſo hatefull a thing to make diuiſion among brethren which are equals,

equals, as that God hath them in great deteſtation which vſe it; how much more is it abominable to imbitter one that is mightie, againſt him that is ſo feeble, where there can be no reſiſtance, nor protection, to bring poore helpeleſſe perſons (as it were) to the ſlaughter houſe, or torture? *Leſt he curſe thee,* Exod. 22. 29. leſt by his prayer vnto God he draw downe a curſe vpon thee, from him who is the defender, and reuenger of the poore, and ſo he plague thee with ſome ſtroke from his owne hand; or he giue thee ouer to ſome ſuch offence, as the court of iuſtice wil take notice of: or puniſh, and bring to light ſome former miſbehauiour of thine, whereof thou peraduenture by this poore ſeruants information or teſtimony ſhall be conuicted: for they that are accuſed, are wont to publiſh all the euill they know by their accuſer: this kind of recrimination is frequent and common.

Verſe 11. *There is a generation that curſeth their father, and doth not bleſſe their mother.*

FOure crooked & wicked generation of ſinners (as it were) in this verſe, and the three next, are yoked together, and deſcribed. The firſt ſtocke is of thoſe that are notable rebels, who curſe their father, and mother, and bleſſe them not, the ſame thing being repeated negatiuely by the contrary: of this ſort are all ſuch as riſe vp againſt them that are in authority, and namely vngratious children, who not onely in heart deſpiſe their parents, and wiſh euill vnto them: but with reuiling, or other malapert ſpeeches abuſe them to their faces, or with murmurings, whiſperings, or other words of contumelie, depraue them behind their backes. It is a great ſinne to vilifie any, be he neuer ſo baſe or meane a friend: but to defame, and deface thoſe who repreſent the Lords perſon, and who are the authors and preſeruers of their liues, muſt needs be an horrible impiety, and moſt inhumane ingratitude; which the Lord commandeth the Magiſtrate to take knowledge of, and to puniſh, and that in a ſeuere manner, euen with no leſſe then death Leuit. 20. 9. it ſelfe, as well as he doth other grieuous and capitall crimes.

Verse 12, *There is a generation that are pure in their owne eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthinesse.*

THe second generation, brood, or race (as it were) proceeding from one age to another, is of infatuated sinners, who are *pure in their owne eyes*, who fantasie their own hearts and waies to be godly and righteous, and like naturall puritanes with their owne testimonie confirme themselues in a great opinion of their owne integritie. For alwaies the worst men are best conceited of themselues, and the more Gods word condemneth them, the more their owne tongues and imaginations iustifie them: For they are blinded by naturall ignorance: the diuell hath blindfolded their minds: and God in his iustice (because they embraced not the loue of his truth) hath giuen *them ouer to strong delusions*, to giue credence vnto, and *beleeue*, the *lyes* of their owne seduced hearts, *and yet are not washed from their filthinesse*, they remaine in the dung of corruption and sinfulnes: they are not iustified by the remission of their sinnes; nor haue their consciences sprinkled with the blood of Iesus Christ; nor sanctified by the spirit of God, and the pure water of grace; they are not made cleane through the word spoken vnto them; they haue no faith, no sound repentance, no vertue in their hearts; no reformation of their waies: and therefore the filthinesse both of the flesh and spirit is increased in them, and not diminished: it groweth more loathsome, and not lesse offensiue.

Vers. 13. *There is a generation whose eyes are lofty, and their eye lids are lifted vp.*

THe third generation is of ambitious and haughtie persons, *whose eyes are lofty*, looking vpward with desire and expectation of great things, and with contempt of their inferiours, and so declare the pride of their heart by their very lookes; *and their eye lids are lifted vp*, by scornfull and disdainfull lookes, bewraying the arrogancie of their spirits: for

he putteth the signe of pride for pride, because euen in their eyes and countenance there is a manifestation of it. See chapter 6.17.

Vers. 14. *There is a generation whose teeth are as swords, and their iaw-bones as knines to deuoure the poore from off the earth, and the needie from among men.*

THe last generation is oppressors, and tyrants, monstrous creatures, mankinde beasts, or beastly men: they haue tushes, or teeth like to boares, or lions, and swords, & kniues, like vnto robbers: the subiect of whose cruelty is *poore*, whom they prey vpon, and make an vtter spoyle of, that they should haue no more place in the earth, or being amongst men: like rauenous wolues eating vp all, that they leaue not so much as the bones behinde them: of these the Prophet complaineth in one of his Psalmes, saying, *I lie among men, who are set on fire, whose teeth are as speares, and arrowes, and their tongue a sharpe sword.* Zeph. 3.3.

Vers. 15. *The horseleach hath two daughters that crie, Giue, giue: there are three things that are neuer satisfied, yea foure that say not it is enough.*

Vers. 16. *The graue, the barren wombe, the earth that is not satisfied with water, and the fire that saith not it is enough.*

AGur declareth the nature of concupiscence, and the insatiable desire of greedie minded men, by diuers comparisons: whereof the first is put single by it selfe; the other ranked and counted together in one number of foure. *The horseleach*, so called, a creature well knowne vnto vs, which is a worme keeping in ponds, or puddles, or muddy brookes, *hath two daughters*, two forkes in her tongue, whereby she first pricketh and pierceth the skinne, and afterward sucketh the blood, which by effect are said to crie, *giue, giue*, and not by voyce: for she is dumbe, and without voyce, and perpetually mute: but her insatiable appetite of sucking blood is the ac-

tuall crye which she maketh: for she neuer giueth ouer till she be filled, and then she falleth off; and yet afterward to it she will againe, and be as hungry of it as she was at the first: which well resembleth the doings of oppressors, who are not contented once to haue spoyled those whom they fastned their mouthes vpon, but comes againe, and againe, and neuer leaue vntill they haue drawne out all the blood of their estate. And let it not seeme strange, that in the former part of the similitude we so interprete *daughter*: For it is vsuall with the Hebrewes, by a borrowed speech, to call the effects, affections and properties of things, the sonnes and daughters thereof: as the *sonne of death*, the *sonne of the morning*, the *daughter of the eye*, *the daughter of the voyce*, *the daughter of the song*. These foure things recited and numbred, wee shall see in order. The

sheol. first is the *graue*, which hath his very name of *craning*, and will neuer cease hungring after dead corpses, so long as *Adams* sonnes and daughters are subiect to mortalitie. See chap. 27. vers. 20. The second is *the barren wombe*, that is to say, the woman whose wombe is barren, which was wont to be vnmeasurably desirous of children, both for the comfortable enioyment of them, with hope of large posterity, which was in great request amongst the people of those times, and places, and for that sterilitie was very disgracefull, as may appeare by the saying of *Rachel* to *Iacob*: *Giue me children, or else I dye.* It is said that the aduersarie of *Hannah Samuels* mother *vexed her sore, for as much as she vpbraided her, because the Lord had made her barren.* And this doth *Elizabeth* the mother of *Iohn* the Baptist confesse to the praise of God, saying, *Thus mercifully hath the Lord dealt with me, to take away my rebuke from among men.* The third is, *the earth, that cannot be satisfied with water*: It can neuer haue enough at one time, to serue for all times: though there bee store now, there may bee need hereafter: though in an ouer wet yeere it be glutted with raine, and made as it were drunken, so that it bee compelled to vomit vp the great abundance that it hath receiued, through too many, too long, too vehement and violent showers; yet if the yeere following want supplie of moysture, the ground will chap and

Gen. 30. 1.

1. Sam. 1. 6.

chawne

chawne with drought, and bee as thirſtie as if it had had no watering before. It might haue ſeemed that *Noahs* flood would haue killed the appetite of the ground, by giuing it ſuch a ſurfeit, that it ſhould haue brooked raine the worſe for many generations, and yet no doubt it had neede of mote, for the good eſtate of the plants and creatures, within a ſhort time after. The fourth is, *the fire that ſaith not it is enough*: Euery one knoweth the nature thereof, that a ſparke will kindle a coale, and that all the fuell which is on the hearth, whereof the flame being too great will ſet the chimney on fire, and the chimney the roofe of the houſe, and that the whole building, and then hauing proceeded ſo farre, will kindle vpon the next houſe, and rauen after the whole ſtreete, and if it may ſeaze thereon, it will make a violent aſſault vpon the next, and ſtill proceed further and further, to the conſumption of the whole citie how ample ſoeuer, vnleſſe it bee with wonderfull paines and power reſiſted.

Verſ. 17. *The eye that mocketh his father, and deſpiſeth to obey his mother, the rauens of the valley ſhall picke it out, and the young eagles ſhall eate it.*

HE deſcribeth the direfull condition of refractarie and graceleſſe children. In the former part their contumacie and ſtubbornes is ſhewen: in the latter their puniſhment and euill end is threatned. *The eye that mocketh his father*, the perſon which with a contemptuous eye doth vilifie his father, either picking a quarrell at the ſight of him in regard of his withered and wrinckled face, crooked backe, or courſe apparell, or any manner of deformitie, which either is indeede, or to his fantaſie ſeemeth to bee in him, or elſe diſdaining him with a ſcorneful look, as being aſhamed to yeeld him any reuerence, *and deſpiſeth to obey his mother*, doth not onely neglect to learne that which ſhe teacheth him, or to performe that which ſhe commandeth him, but with the deſpight of his minde refuſeth both, *the rauens of the valley ſhall picke it out, and the young eagle ſhall eate it*, the fierceſt and moſt cruell ſort of ra-

uens, and thoſt eagles which are moſt buſie, and with their beakes and tallens are better able to teare, ſhall haue him, like the carrion of a dead beaſt expoſed to them for a prey, his death ſhall not be peaceable and honourable, but violent and ſhamefull: and buriall he ſhall haue none at all, but ſhall either hang vpon the gibbet, till he drop downe peecemeale, or lie as a rotten ſheepe, or hilded horſe in a ditch, and ſo bee eaten vp of eagles, rauenous kites, and crowes, and other fowles of that nature: and equall it is, that hee which doth ſo vnnaturally lothe his kinde and pitifull parents, out of whoſe bowels hee proceeded, ſhould bee giuen for meate to vnmercifull creatures, and bee buried in their bowels. And albeit this plague be not executed vpon all ſuch malefactors, yet they are all obnoxious to it, and liue in danger of it: one ſo puniſhed, doth threaten a million, and there is no one in like manner guiltie, but may feare that he ſhall taſte of it, to his paine, to his ſhame, and to his deſtruction.

Verſ. 18. *There be three things which are too wonderfull for me, yea foure which I vnderſtand not.*

Verſ. 19. *The way of an Eagle in the aire, the way of a Serpent on a rocke, the way of a ſhip in the middeſt of the ſea, and the way of a man with a maide.*

HE goeth on by enumeration of diuers things, by propoſition of three or foure together, to ſhew the like natures, or effects, or diſpoſitions to aggrauate certaine vices, and afterward to amplifie and illuſtrate certaine vertues. The vice which here he is in hand with is incontinencie & whoredome, which hee proueth to be more frequent and common then the world knoweth, and ẏ there be many foule practiſes of it, which neuer come to mans knowledge. *There are three things hid from me*, whereof it is impoſſible for me, or any man, to know the particulars, *yea foure which I know not*, which I could neuer apprehend all: for that the infinite indiuiduall acts of them no man could obſerue, and being once paſt, they leaue no memoriall thereof behinde them. The firſt

is, *the way of an Eagle in the ayre*: For ſhe leaueth no notes, or paths of her flight: and though this be common to all other birds, yet hee nameth eſpecially the *Eagle*, both becauſe ſhe is the chiefe of fowles, and flieth moſt high, and ſwiftly. The ſecond is, *the way of a Serpent vpon a rock*, who leaueth no ſlime behinde her, as the ſnaile doth where ſhe creepeth, neither maketh ſhe any print of her body on the ſtone ouer which ſhe glideth, whereas when ſhe creepeth on the duſt ſhe may bee traced, and her winding in a dew may be ſeene on the graſſe. The third is, *the way of a ſhip in the middeſt of the ſea*, which albeit while it is ſayling (eſpecially in a calme) maketh ſome path for a ſhort time, and little way, yet after it is gone a little diſtance, the paſſage thereof cannot be found: by reaſon that the waters wherein it fleeteth commeth together, and ſo there is no appearance that euer it had been there: *and the way of a* [illegible] who is inamoured with loue, or inflamed with concupiſcence, his wilie ſolicitations, his artificiall plots, and cunning deuices to winne conſent, and get his luſt ſatisfied, *with a maide*, with a virgine vnpolluted before his attempts, and ſo remaineth, if ſhe can withſtand his guilefull allurements, otherwiſe ſhe is one that would be ſo taken, and will ſhameleſly affirme her ſelfe ſo to be, and others (becauſe her leaudnes is not diſcouered) doe ſo eſteeme of her.

Verſ. 20. *Such is the way of an adulterous woman, ſhe eateth, and wipeth, and ſaith, I haue done no wickednes.*

Sveh] So cloſe, and vnknowne: For to that end in way of aplication, he alleageth thoſe foure ſtrange things rehearſed before, by certaine ſimilitudes, demonſtrating the priuie, ſecret, ſubtile, and impudent dealings of the harlot. *She eateth*, ſhe cõmitteth follie, ſhe is like to thoſe ẏ eate ſtollen bread in dark corners: thus in good tearmes ẏ holy Ghoſt declareth euill matters: for that he ſtudiouſly auoideth all obſcenitie of ſpeech, *and wipeth her mouth*, making a goodly ſhew as if ſhe were honeſt, doth as it were wipe downe all the crummes of filthineſſe, that no ſigne of her wantonnes ſhould appeare: and

conceiuing

conceiuing great boldnes that her whoredome is concealed for euer, and neuer to come to light, *she saith I haue done no wickednes*, I am free from all impuritie, and vnchaft behauiour.

Verſe 21. *For three things the earth is diſquieted, and for foure which it cannot beare.*

IN the premiſes he conioyned diuers things together which did accord, or reſemble one another in ſecrecie, and cloſenes, and in this verſe, and the two next, hee ranketh certaine ſorts of people, and thoſe of the baſer ſort, ſome of them men, ſome women, which are notoriouſly apart, being too manifeſtly diſcerned and felt too heauilie: for the earth is moued at them, the inhabitants haue iuſt occaſion to quake and tremble, and the inſenſible and vnreaſonable things doe ſhake at them: *and for foure which it cannot beare*, ſo intollerable they are and burdenous: he vſeth there a hyperbolicall ſpeech, arguing the incommodities they bring to the places wherein they dwell, and the troubles and moleſtations wherewith they diſquiet and vexe the folke with whom they liue: and theſe are they that follow.

Verſe 22. *For a ſeruant when he raigneth, and a foole when he is filled with meate.*

FOr a ſeruant when he raigneth] When vnworthy men, and perſons vnfit for high callings, are aduanced to the ſame: for they know not how to vſe authority, but peruert it both to their owne hurt, and oppreſſion of others: a ſlauiſh heart of all others is moſt ready to be imperious, and none growe ſo outragiouſly inſolent, as thoſe that are moſt abiect, and contemptible. See chap. 19.10. *and a foole*, a wicked man, deſtitute of godly wiſdome, *when he is filled with meate*, when hee hath plentie, and abundance of food, apparell, wealth, and other proſperitie. See alſo the 19. chap. verſe the 10.

Verſe 23.

Verſe 23. *For an odious woman when ſhe is married, and an handmaid that is heire to her miſtreſſe.*

For an odious woman] Which is troubleſome, and inclining to frowardnes, or any other way vitious, or ill mannered, for which ſhe is worthily had in deteſtation, *when ſhe is married*, when ſhe is become a wife, when ſhe is become a dame, or miſtreſſe: her husband, her ſeruants, her neighbours, and all that haue to deale with her, ſhall find and feele what mettall ſhe is made of; naught ſhe was, while ſhe liued a ſingle life, but worſe now ſhe hath crept into the bed, and boſome of her husband: her roote was naught before, but not able to ſend forth buds, or leaues: but now ſhe is planted in rank mould, ſhe will ſhoote forth her vnſeemely branches, and vnſauory bloſſomes: her husband muſt be a patient to ſuſtaine her lewd conditions, and her agent to effect her ſinfull purpoſes againſt his people, or againſt his neighbours, or againſt his friends; ſhe will preſcribe, and he muſt performe; her tongue muſt appoint it, and his hand effect it: ſuch a one was *Ioſephs* miſtreſſe, a treacherous beaſt againſt him, and yet a forcible commander of him, to wreake her malice vpon the beſt ſeruant that euer he had, becauſe hee would not be perfidious with her for company. Such a one was *Iezabel*, vnder whom being married vnto *Achab*, it might properly be ſaid that the land of Iſrael was troubled, for the perſecutions which ſhe cauſed to be raiſed, the ſlaughters which ſhe cauſed to be made, the Idolatrie which ſhe cauſed to be committed, and all the villanies which ſhe cauſed to be wrought: *and an hand-maid*, for one that hath bin a ſeruant before, *that is heire to her miſtreſſe*, married to her maſter, and ſo poſſeſſeth that preferment, and thoſe commodities which her miſtreſſe inioyed before: for hauing gotten a better ſtate, her heart will ſwell, and waxe proud, and through the height of her minde, ſhe will demeane her ſelfe ſo inſolently, that neither ſeruants, nor children, nor husband himſelfe can wel indure her arrogancy: yet this is not to be vnderſtood of euery one ſo promoted, if ſhe be of an humble, meeke,

meeke, and quiet ſpirit: but this imputation is onely laid vpon them which are of the number of thoſe *odious women*, before ſpoken of.

Verſe 24. *There are foure things in the earth which are little, but exceeding wiſe.*

AFter the foure former quaternions, which were brought for the aggrauation of certaine ſorts of ſinnes, there followe two others, which he vſeth for the illuſtration of the vertue, and imitation of that which is good euen in the creatures, which are led onely by the inſtinct of nature, without the vſe of reaſon: for their naturall properties are herein deſcribed, to the end that thereby we ſhould receiue morall inſtruction; in ſo much as there is nothing ſo meane, but a man for his benefit may learne inſtruction from it: as *Iob* ſaith, *Aske now the beaſts and they ſhall teach thee, and the fowles of the heauen and they tell thee.* And theſe of the firſt order are ſet forth by that which is praiſe worthy in them, and common to them all, which is done in this verſe: and then by the ſeuerall commendable properties, and qualities that are found in euery one of them: the commendation that he giueth of them all is that they are ſmall, but yet prudent, hauing little bodies, but great ſtore of naturall wiſdome therein.

Iob. 12. 7.

Verſe 25. *The Ants a people not ſtrong, yet prepare their meate in the ſommer.*

AND among theſe commendable, and immitable creatures, the *Ants* be ſet in the firſt place, and are reſembled to a people for their multitude, but weake, and feeble, and very defectiue in power, and far vnable to defend themſelues by incounter, or get their food by hard labour: notwithſtanding, that which is wanting in might, is ſupplied by forecaſt, and ſo their prouidence ſerueth them for power. *For they prepare their meate in ſommer*, they gather their food which ſhall nouriſh them all the yeere in the ſommer ſeaſon; while

while corne may be had, and the season is conuenient, applie themselues to lay vp against harder times, which the wise man inducеth, and bringeth in as a patterne of good prouidence, for taking the time (as we say) while time serueth, as they doe which in youth make prouision for old age: in plenie for scarcitie: in health for sickнes: in a peaceable estate for persecutions, troubles, and molestations, as see chap. 6. 7.

Verse 26. *The hill rats a people not mightie, yet make their houses in the rockes.*

THe second place is giuen to the *hill rats*, a creature vnknowne in these parts of the world, but in great plenty about Iudea, and Syria: the writers describe it to be a little beast in part like to a rat, and in part like to a Beare, it hath neither strength of limmes, nor any other meanes to defend it selfe from dogs, or any other creature that should make a pray of it: but this wit she hath, that she diggeth her holes in the mountaines, and stonie places, (which our conies cannot doe, and therefore it cannot be meant of them) and therein flieth in time of danger, and therein layeth her yong ones safely: teaching this point of wisedome that when our owne power faileth to protect vs, we seeke helpe elsewhere, and that in place where it may surely be had for our defence, and security. Psal. 104. 18.

Verse 27. *The beasts haue no King, yet goe they forth all by bands.*

IN the third place are ranked the *locusts*, which are certaine flies with long legs, whereof there were great store in the east countries, which *haue no King*, no principall, or chiefe ruler ouer them, as the Bees are affirmed to haue, *yet goe they forth all by bands*, yet haue they such respect to their owne safety, as not to single themselues asunder, which would be dangerous, and beare such loue to concord, which is most comfortable, that they marshall in a company as it were in battell aray, and strengthen themselues by flocking in infinite heapes whereout

whereout the wise man, though hee make no application, would haue this morall learned: that needfull, and good seruices are to be performed, though they be not vrged thereto by compulsion, nor inforced by the command of authority, and that ascotiation, and combination in lawfull affaires is very vsefull, and of great valditie, for the publike good, and also the benefit of euery mans priuat estate.

Verse 28. *The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in the Kings Palaces.*

LAst of all commeth the *spider*, who is said to *take hold*, of the thread, which she hath spunne, *with her hands*, not that they are such indeed, but because they are set some on one side, and some on another, as mens hands are, and because they doe the office of hands, that is, apprehend, and lay hold on things, otherwise in proper speech they are feete: *and is in the Kings Palaces*, labouring busilie about her web in the most sumptuous roomes, and magnificent buildings that can bee; her curious workmanship in making of her cobweb, and her constant industry, with diligent trauell in the same, is brought in, to admonish men not to be slothfull in their vocations, but industrious: not to be vnskilfull slubberers in their trades, or professions, but expert Artificers, and exact workemen, labouring so to excell therein, that they may doe those things which be commendable, and admirable, though with a better minde then to seeke praise and applause for the same.

Verse 29. *There be three things that order well their going; yea foure that are comely in going.*

IN the former quaternion *Agur* proposed the obseruable properties of certaine feeble creatures of little respect, the most of them being but insects, for mens vse and instruction: in this following he presenteth to our view for a patterne of comelines, and courage, the example of others that are more heroicall, and renowned all agreeing in the well ordering of their

their goings, and in the ſeemelineſſe of their pace: In the recitall whereof his intent is to incite euery man to looke well to his carriage, that he walke decently, and as becommeth him in the place which he holdeth: good mens eyes be fixed vpon him; and bad mens eyes doe ſtrictly behold him; he conuerſeth conſtantly in the preſence of Gods Angels, and euery ſtep of al his paths are perpetually before the Lord.

Verſe 30. *A Lion which is ſtrongeſt among beaſts, and turneth not away for any.*

Verſe 31. *A horſe which hath his loynes girt vp, an he goat, and a King againſt whom there is no riſing vp.*

HE beginneth with the *Lion*, who in his paſſage any whither goeth not timerouſly, and cowardly in feare: hee trembleth not nor flyeth backe, although he ſee the Elephant, nor any the like beaſt, but proceedeth on forward with a valiant courage: next he fetteth out the *Horſe*, eſpecially whē he is harneſſed for the battell, or prepared for the race: the *metaphor* being taken from the people of the eaſt, and their cuſtome, who when they went readily about any thing, would truſſe vp their garments about their loynes: the diſpoſition and valour of this beaſt is well knowne vnto vs, how gallantly he ſetteth himſelfe to praunce, ſtampe, rayne, or runne, according as he is put vnto it: and of him the Lord giueth this teſtimony to *Iob*: *Haſt thou giuen the horſe ſtrength, or couered his necke with neighing? haſt thou made him afraid as the graſſe hopper? his ſtrong neighing is fearefull. He diggeth in the valley, and reioyceth in his ſtrength, he goeth forth to meete the harneſſed man: he mocketh at feare, and is not afraid, and turneth not backe from the ſword: the quiuer ratleth at him, the glittering ſpeare, and the ſhield. He ſwalloweth the ground for fiercenes and rage, and beleeueth not that it is the trumpet; he ſaith among the trumpetters, ha, ha; he ſmelleth the battell a far off, and the noyſe of the Captaines, and the ſhouting.* Iob. 39.22.23. 24.25.26.27. 28.

In the third place he mentioneth the *hee goate*, who being the ring-leader of the flocke, not onely walketh before the ſame

ſame with a certaine ſtatelines, but with cheerefulnes in the ſight of the reſt, climeth vp the craggie rockes and mountaines.

Hee concludeth with the *King*, not putting him laſt as the meaneſt, but ſhutting vp all with him as the worthieſt, in compariſon of whom (if he bee a man worthie of his place) the others are but a ſhadow: hee is a Lord, and commander ouer them all. For if man in reſpect of his kinde was made to haue dominion ouer all the beaſts, and though he had forfeited the ſame, it was reſtored to him againe through Chriſt; how much more hath the King this prerogatiue, who is the Prince ouer men? and *againſt* him (it is ſaid) *there is no riſing vp*: not but that there be many mutinies and rebellions, but few of them take place, God being in a ſpeciall manner the *Kings* protector: For that hee is his Deputie and Liutenant, and whom if he did not maintaine and ſupport, humane ſocietie would be diſſolued; and therefore beſides his owne watchfull eye, and prouident hand, he hath alſo armed him with maieſtie and authoritie: he hath put the ſword into his hand, for defence of himſelfe, and vengeance on his enemies. Such a one then ought a Prince to be, mightie, valiant, and full of magnanimitie, againſt whom none ſhould dare to ſtand vp, or be audacious to reſiſt: and theſe inſtances are induced for inſtruction to them that haue authoritie committed to thē, that they might learne how well it beſeemeth them to ſhew themſelues bolde, and feareleſſe in their places. So the Lord doth animate and hearten *Ioſhua*, ſaying, *Be ſtrong, and of good courage: for vnto this people ſhalt thou diuide for an inheritance, the land which I ſware to their fathers to giue them. Only bee ſtrong, and very couragious, that thou maiſt obſerue to doe, according to all the law which Moſes my ſeruant commanded thee: turne not from neither to the right hand, nor to the left.*

Ioſh. 1. 6. 7.

Verſ. 32. *If thou haſt done fooliſhly in lifting vp thy ſelfe: or if thou haſt thought euill, lay thine hand vpon thy mouth.*

IN the premiſes by examples hee taught men of place to be valerous, and couragiouſly to maintaine the honour of their places

places, and in this verse with that which followeth, he admoniſheth all men not to abuſe his inſtruction to haughtines, and turbulencie, but to frame themſelues to modeſtie, and peaceablenes; which hee doth by giuing men direction, how they ſhould diſpoſe of themſelues thereto, and by producing a reaſon, as a motiue to perſwade them to labour therin: *If thou haſt done fooliſhly*, if thou haſt outwardly ſinned through folly, *in lifting vp thy ſelfe*, in proud ſpeeches, and arrogant behauiour: For ambition, vaine glorie, and all the effects of a conceited minde are nothing elſe but meere fooliſhnes: as *Habakkuk* ſaith, *Hee that lifteth vp himſelfe, his minde is not vpright within him. Indeed the proud man is as he that tranſgreſſeth by wine.* Hab. 2. 4. 5. *Or if thou haſt thought euill*, if thou haſt giuen entertainment to vnlouing ſurmiſes, eſpecially if thou haſt inwardly nouriſhed any vncharitable purpoſes of doing euill, *lay thy hand vpon thy mouth*, be ſilent, leaue off, and giue ouer. For the firſt ſtep to reformation is to ceaſe from maintaining of ſinne: For the Lord by *Ezechiel* doth promiſe it as a ſound teſtimonie of vnfained repentance, ſaying, *that thou maiſt remember, and be aſhamed, and neuer open thy mouth any more.* Ezek. 26. 63. And therefore *Iob* alſo by this argumtnt doth make profeſſion of his humiliation, ſaying, *Behold I am vile: what ſhall I anſwere thee? I will lay my hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I ſpoken, but I will anſwere no more; yea twice, but I will proceede no further.* Iob. 39. 37. 38. And ſo the wiſe man here doth preſcribe it as a ſigne, and note of repentance, which hee would haue thoſe that fall through pride to riſe againe vnto: becauſe that it alway findeth mercie, and ſalueth vp the wounds that ſinne maketh.

Verſ. 33. *Surely as the churning of milke bringeth foorth butter, and the wringing of the noſe bringeth forth blood: ſo the forcing of anger bringeth forth ſtrife.*

THe reaſon wherby he dehorteth men frō ſuch courſes, as bewray a proud heart in ourſelues, and baſe opinion of our brethren, is from the euill euent which will follow vpon it, the ſtirres, ſtrife, and troubles, which are like to be kindled there-

by, and is amplified by two familiar similitudes touching things obuious to all sorts: the meaneſt girle in a countrie knoweth that much beating doth seuer the thinner milke from the thicker creame, and so causeth *butter* to arise: and very children doe vnderstand, and feele that the hard and vehement rubbing of the nostrils maketh blood to fall downe, and issue out of them: *So he that forceth wrath*, stirreth other men to anger by his prouoking speeches, *bringeth forth strife*, is the cause of much dissension: sometimes of brawling, sometimes of fighting, sometimes of suites, sometimes of warre: who can recount or thinke of the particular mischiefes that may insue thereupon? By this *Sihon* king of the Amorites brought himselfe to ruine, and his kingdom to be conquered: by this *Amaziah* king of Iudah brought a foile with much miserie vpon himselfe, and the people, because hee compelled *Ioash* the king of Israel perforce to meete him in the field: and by this *Asahel* the brother of *Ioab* brought himselfe vnto an vntimely death, by prouoking *Abner* with ouer much wilfulnes and vehemencie.

Numb.21.23. 24.

2.Chron.15. 27.28.

CHAPTER. XXXI.

Verſ.1. *The words of King Lemuel, the prophecie that his mother taught him.*

THis Chapter consisteth of two parts: the one, the title: the other, the discourse it selfe. In this title is declared first in generall the nature or forme of the treatise insuing, a *prophecie*, an holie and excellent doctrine, which had a better author then *Lemuels* mother, or *Lemuel* himselfe, the holie Ghost, who was pleased to vse only their tongue and pen, for the publication of it to the Church: and secondly, the persons which are interested therein, which are *Lemuel*, and his mother: *The words of King Lemuel*, which he wrought, hauing

before

before receiued them as inſtructions from his mother. This *Lemuel* no doubt was *Salomon*, both for that he was called a King, of which name beſides him there was none other in Iſrael, or Iudah: and for that the word hath ſo neere affinitie with his name, as it is in Hebrew, the firſt letter being taken away from the beginning, and the word *El*, which ſignifieth God, being added to the end; which alteration being made, *Lemuel* ſignifieth *him that appertaineth to God*. Now hauing found who *Lemuel* was, there will be no difficultie to vnderſtand who his mother was: for the Scripture plainly affirmeth her to be *Bathſheba* the wife of *Dauid*, who had formerly bin the yoke-fellow of *Vrijah* the Hittite, who notwithſtanding ſhe had failed of loue to him, and puritie in her ſelfe, by yeelding vnto the vnlawfull ſolicitations of *Dauid*; yet vpon due repentance is imployed by God in this great ſeruice, to be (as it were) the mouth of his ſpirit, for the vttering of his words, which ſhould perpetually be recorded for the information of his people through all poſterities.

Verſ. 2. *What my ſonne! and what the ſonne of my wombe! and what the ſonne of my vowes!*

BEfore ſhe deliuereth her precepts, or doctrines, wherewith ſhe is about to inſtruct him, ſhe inſinuateth her ſelfe into him to poſſeſſe his heart, and intentiuenes of minde to that which ſhe ſhall ſpeake vnto him, partly by the manner of her ſpeech, and partly by the arguments which ſhe produceth. Touching the manner, ſhe purpoſely intimateth her motherly affection to him, and vehement deſire of his good, by an abrupt manner of ſpeaking, and ſuch as is more ful of affection then of ſenſe expreſſely vttered: *What my ſonne!* &c. The arguments whereby ſhe allureth his minde, to make it benenolent and pliable to her, are two, and both of them neerely concerning himſelfe: the firſt, that he is her *ſonne*, yea the *ſonne of her wombe*, her naturall ſonne, and hee that is moſt tender and deare vnto her: and therefore hee may well be perſwaded of her good meaning toward him, as one whom ſhe hath bred

in her owne bowels, and brought foorth into the world, and is so neerely vnited to her by so strong a band of nature, and therefore ought also for his part respectiuely to reuerence her, and heedfully to regard her graue and weightie sayings. The second, that he is the *sonne* of her *vowes*, for whose being, life and welfare, she hath made prayers, and promises vnto God, and offered sacrifices with praises: and therfore he is also tied in conscience, for pietie and religion, to listen vnto, and obey her, especially being so kinde a mother, and prescribing such needfull duties, who hath made and performed such solemne vowes in his behalfe.

Vers. 3. *Giue not thy strength to women, nor thy waies to that which destroyeth Kings.*

THe lessons and instructions which *Bathsheba* giueth vnto *Salomon*, are some informing him how to carrie himselfe in the gouernment of the Common-wealth, vnto the tenth verse: and others directing him concerning the state of a priuate familie in that, and the rest following. For the former, she admonisheth him of certaine vices which hee is especially to shunne, as incontinencie, and intemperancie, & commendeth vnto him such duties as hee is to performe, as iustice, and mercie. *Giue not thy strength to women*, spend not thy strength vpon strange women, or harlots: by *strength* she vnderstandeth not onely his substance, but also the powers and good estate of the bodie, and minde. For the custome of whoredom doth consume a mans state how wealthy soeuer: it weakneth his bodie, though it be of a strong constitution: it dulleth the wits, and taketh away the vigour thereof, though before they were very prompt and pregnant. See chap. 5. 9. 10. *Nor to that*, to the haunting of that vice; or to the companie of those persons, whorish women, *which destroy Kings*, which cause the ruine both of kingdomes and Princes: For they draw downe Gods curse, which the mightiest haue no more power to resist then the weakest, and which God executeth without all respect of persons. *Iob* was wealthie: *Iob* was of great

great authoritie: *Iob* was a man of much wiſedome: and *Iobs* credit and eſtimation was very great, and yet he durſt not take libertie to yeeld to the luſts of his fleſh, in the practiſe of this ſinne: *for* (ſaith he) *this is a fire that would deuoure all my increaſe.* Iob. 31. 12.

Verſ. 4. *It is not for Kings, O Lemuel, it is not for Kings to drinke wine, nor for Princes ſtrong drinke.*

TO diſſwade her ſonne from tipling and voluptuouſnes, ſhe ſheweth how vnworthie a thing it is, and a fault altogether misbeſeeming his place and dignitie. *It is not for Kings, O Lemuel, to drinke wine, nor Princes ſtrong drinke:* The reſtraint of intemperate drinking is not laid vpon thee alone, but belongeth to all of thy place and condition: no *King*, no *Prince*, hath allowance to paſſe the rules of ſobrietie, either in taking too much, or in drinking of that which is too hot, and apt to inflame; and therefore neither haſt thou wrong in being admoniſhed to be ſparing, neither haſt thou immunitie to tranſgreſſe this precept more then others, ſince it is common to all of thy ranke: yet is not *wine*, or *ſtrong drinke*, vnlawfull for *Kings* or *Princes* to vſe, and refreſh themſelues with, only exceſſe, and the inordinate taking thereof is prohibited.

Verſe 5. *Leſt they drinke, and forget the law, and peruert the iudgement of the afflicted.*

SHe backeth her caueat, and confirmeth her reaſon, by the incommoditie and miſchiefe that will enſue, when Magiſtrates and gouernours exceede the bounds of moderation, and giue themſelues to ouer much drinking, becauſe they being ouercome of wine doe faile of dutie, and neglect iuſtice, to the damage and detriment of a great multitude. *Leſt they drinke* ouer much, *and forget the law*, not onely the commandements and ordinances of God, but alſo the certaine and appointed order of law and equitie, and *peruert*, change, and turne vpſide downe, *the iudgement*, the cauſe, and ſentence of

the afflicted, of ſuch as being otherwiſe poore, are oppreſſed alſo with wrongs and iniuries, which will be much increaſed by the intemperate Magiſtrate, who in ſtead of miniſtring helpe and ſuccour vnto them, doth make their caſe more heauie, by paſſing a wrongful ſentence againſt them: and ſhe maketh ſpeciall mention of theſe rather then of the rich; becauſe they are more ſubiect to violence and oppreſſion; and vſually haue their cauſes leſſe regarded. The point that the higheſt would haue notified by this ſaying, is, that it is dangerous for the people when the rulers bee voluptuous: they are ſhepheards, and by their diſabilitie the flocke is damnified: they are coach-men, or rather Pilots, which haue many liues committed to their care and cuſtodie: and therefore ſaith Eccleſiaſtes: *Woe to thee O land when thy King is a childe, and thy Princes eate in the morning. Bleſſed art thou O land when thy King is the ſonne of Nobles, and thy Princes eate in due ſeaſon for ſtrength, and not for drunkennes.*

Eccle.10.16.17

Verſ.6. *Giue ſtrong drinke vnto him that is readie to periſh, and wine to them that be of heauie hearts.*

SHe amplifieth her admonition by the contrarie, and ſheweth to whom *wine* and *ſtrong drinke* doe chiefly appertaine, to them *that are readie to periſh*, through manifold afflictions, either inward or outward, lying vpon them, and *to them that be of heauie hearts*, whoſe ſpirits are oppreſſed with ſorrowes and heauineſſe, or with griefes and terrors.

Verſ.7. *Let him drinke, and forget his pouerty, and remember his miſerie no more.*

THe cauſe wherefore they ſhould enioy the more free vſe of *wine* and *ſtrong drinke*, ſhe alleageth, *that they may forget their pouertie*, the want that they liue in, or any other euils or calamities that are burthenſome vnto them: For vnder one kinde ſhe comprehendeth all, *and remember their miſerie no more*, being as long as may be by this meanes diſpatched of

their

their cares, and troubleſome cogitations. It is as if ſhe ſhould haue ſaid, let him that is ready to ſinke vnder the weight of troubles and terrors, refreſh his heart with a comfortable drawght of *wine*, or *ſtrong drinke*, that the remembrance of his woe and miſery, which pierceth his heart, may be ſomewhat abated, and remoued. It is farre from the intent of the ſpirit of God to allow exceſſe, or carowſing in any, neither doth the doctrine confirme, or warrant either giuing wine or ſtrong drinke to malefactors drawen to execution, or ſicke perſons labouring on their death-bed for life, at which time they ought to be moſt ſober, and watchfull. Onely theſe inſtructions tend to declare that ſome, namely thoſe that are in extreame aduerſity, cannot only beare a large quantitie of ſtrong drinke without hurt, but receiue much good thereby; which being taken in the ſame meaſure by ſome in proſperity, or authority, would vtterly ouerthrow them, or make them vnfit to follow their calling.

Verſe 8. *Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cauſe of all ſuch as are appointed to deſtruction.*

OPen thy mouth] Speake in the behalfe of the oppreſſed, who becauſe they cannot, or dare not pleade for themſelues, may well be called *dumb*, and yet haue an equal, iuſt, and righteous cauſe: for thoſe that ſpeake leaſt are many times more innocent then thoſe that are full of words: for ſome want skill, and are not able to ſpeake in their owne defence: ſome put vp great wrongs, and with ſilence paſſe by the iniuries that are offered vnto them: ſome be abſent, and heare not the imputations that are laid vpon them: ſome bee borne down with violence, & not permitted to ſpeake for thẽſelues, as was *Ioſephs* caſe, who was ſore puniſhed before his apology could be heard: ſo *Mordecay*, and all the Iewes were irrecouerably deſtinated to death, and yet neuer had bin called to the barre to make their anſwere, *in the cauſe of all ſuch as are appointed to deſtruction*, being vniuſtly purſued, are vnrighteouſlie condemned, and ready to bee executed: for innocent

men are many times in as great perill of their life, or eſtate, as the moſt faultie malefactors: where almoſt can a worſe man be found, then *Naboth* was charged to be? or what greater crime doth bring men to their end, then that whereof the imputation occaſioned his death? he ſuffered as a profeſſed traytor againſt his prince, and as an execrable blaſphemer of God himſelfe. What creature was euer ſo harmeleſſe, and righteous, as Ieſus Chriſt? and yet who euer did beare a greater burden of accuſations, and that with clamours, and outcries? And this proceedeth partly from the malice of their enemies: and partly from the prouidence of God, that his power may be ſeene in their deliuerance, or that their patience may be for the incouragement, and example of others: and that their reward may be greater in heauen.

Verſe 9. *Open thy mouth, iudge righteouſly, and pleade the cauſe of the poore and needy.*

OPen thy mouth] Take their perſon vpon thy ſelfe, make their cauſe thine own, though their aduerſary through force, lies, or fallaces doe ſet them downe that they cannot reply, yet thou knowing what is to be ſaid for them, ſpeake it, and maintaine their cauſe: for they that haue meanes, and ability to helpe their brethren, ought to ſupply their wants which cannot deale for themſelues. Amongſt the great comforts of
Iob 29.15.16. *Iob*, this was one, that he had bin, *eyes to the blind, and feete to the lame, and had bin a father to the poore, and ſearched out the cauſe which he knew not:* and for this ſeruice *Abedmelech* ſpeaking to the King of Iudah for *Ieremiah* impriſoned: and *Eaſter* ſpeaking to the King of Perſia for her diſtreſſed people, ſhall be renowned to the worlds end: and *Pharao* his butler ſhould haue had much more praiſe, if he had made mention of *Ioſeph*, and his hard intreatie, vnto his maſter ſooner.

Verſe 10.

Verſe 10. *Who can find a vertuous woman: for her price is far aboue carbuncles.*

SHe directeth *Salomon* to prouide wel for the good eſtate of his family, by making choice of a faithfull, gratious, and well qualified wife: neither doth ſhe in plaine and expreſſe tearmes aduiſe him to match with ſuch a one, but by ſetting forth of her large praiſe, and amplifying her manifold fruits, ſhe doth allure him to vſe his beſt care and diligence to ſeeke out, and prouide himſelfe of ſuch a one: and hence to the end of the Chapter, euery verſe beginneth with an Hebrew letter, according to the order of the alphabet, and accord iuſt with the number of them; the excellency, and rarenes of a good wife, with her ſingular graces he deſcribeth in this verſe, and all the reſt to the 28. and then the reward, and incouragement which is due vnto her, to the end of the Chapter. The commendation which ſhe giueth of her in the firſt place, is generall, and illuſtrated by compariſon, as appeareth in this preſent verſe: and afterward it is more ſpecial, all in regard of her particular vertues in many ſentences following: *who can find*, by any thing that he himſelfe can doe, *a vertuous woman*, a good and holy woman: he propoſeth it in manner of queſtion, both becauſe good wiues are hard to bee found for the ſcarcity of them: there are many rich, witty, perſonable, and beautifull; but few adorned with pietie, and goodnes: few are godly, and gratious, as alſo becauſe ſuch women are Gods rare and ſingular gifts, *her price is farre aboue carbuncles*, ſhe is not only rare, and hard to come by, like the pretious ſtones, but being once obtained, a man cannot ſet too great a price or value of her: for no treaſure can be comparable to a good wife. See Chap. 12.4.

Verſe 11. *The heart of her husband doth ſafely truſt in her, ſo that he ſhall haue no need of ſpoile.*

HAuing thus ſpoken of her praiſe in generall tearmes, hee deſcendeth to a more particular relation of her laudable vertues,

vertues, and qualities, and thoſe, though many, may yet be reduced into three heads: the firſt is her huſwifery, and prudent care for her ſelfe, the good eſtate of her husband, and wel-fare of her family, and this is to be ſeene almoſt in euery verſe: the ſecond, her mercy, and liberalitie to the poore, as appeareth by the twentieth verſe: the third, her piety, godlines, and religion, in the fiue and twenty, and ſixe and twenty verſes, *the heart of her husband doth ſafely truſt in her*, whether he be abſent, or preſent, he doubteth not either of her chaſtitie, of her ſecreſie, or of his care for the family, and committeth to her the diſpoſing of his affaires that are within doore: for the more religious any wife is, the leſſe occaſion ſhe giueth to her huſband to ſuſpect her: his goods, ſtuffe, or whatſoeuer he hath in his houſe he may know ſhall be ſafely looked vnto without filching, or purloyning: hee may well know that ſhe will haue an eye to the ſeruants to keepe them from ſinne and idlenes: ſhe will order the children, and not ſuffer them through want of education to grow rude, and euill mannered: her eye will be to the prouiſion of the houſe, that it bee well dreſſed, and ſeaſonably miniſtred vnto her people: he may boldly inuite a friend, and giue welcome vnto him at any time, ſhee will not lowre vpon him, or be to ſeeke of prouiſion, or bee careleſſe to grace his houſe with ſuch things as are needfull and decent: *ſo that he ſhall haue no need of ſpoile*, he ſhall not want any neceſſaries, or through pouertie be compelled to relieue himſelfe with wrong, and hurt to others: either through violence or deceit, through fraud or impreſſion. For ſhe will by Gods bleſſing vpon her labours, prouidence, and good gouernment, ſo farre as ſtand with the ſafety of his ſoule, and make for the welfare of himſelfe, and his houſhold, inrich him with variety, plenty, and choice of all his commodities, like to martiall men who hauing ſubdued the countries of his enemies, and taken their cities by aſſault doe ranſacke the ſame, and ſeize vpon their treaſures, and beſt goods, at their pleaſures, and bring home the ſame to their owne houſes. The ſame ſimilitude was vſed, but in worſe part, in the firſt Chapter by theſe perillous ſeducers: *we ſhall finde all precious riches, and*

fill

fill our houſes full of ſpoile. What good baytes are gotten in warre, we may conceiue by the ineſtimable riches which *Dauid* had gathered together, and brought to Ieruſalem, toward the building of the temple, and the inualuable wealth, which *Nebucadnezzar* ſurpriſed, and carried from Ieruſalem at the deſtruction of the temple, with the city.

Verſe 12. *She will doe him good, and not euill all the dayes of his life.*

SHe will doe him good] By carefull performance of the duties of her place, and not *euill*, either by bringing hurt vnto his eſtate, or griefe to his heart, or diſhonour to his name: for commodity by a wife one way, yeeldeth no warrant to wrong her husband another: *Michol* though ſhe had bin a meanes for preſeruation of *Dauids* life, was yet puniſhed afterward for deſpiſing of him: *Iobs* wife had done good in bringing him children, yet not excuſed for diſquieting his heart, and mouing him to diſtemper, and impatience, *all the dayes of her life*, ſo long as they two ſhall liue together; as if he ſhould haue ſaid, This vertuous woman wil be conſtant in loue to her husband, in youth, in age, in proſperitie, in aduerſity, in ſickenes, in health, ſhe doth what ſhe can vnto him, in his body, his ſoule, and his eſtate; ſhe prouideth ſuch food as may nouriſh him: ſhe ſtirreth him vp to the ſeruice of God: ſhe ſaueth his goods as much as is poſſible: ſhe lowreth not on him with her countenance: ſhe croſſeth him not in her words: ſhe vexeth him not by her deeds: if ſhe know any thing that will pleaſe or profit him, about ſhe goeth with all ſpeed: if ſhe perceiue any thing that will offend, or hurt him, that ſhe auoydeth, and ſhunneth with all care.

Verſe 13. *She ſeeketh wooll, and flaxe, and worketh willingly with her hands.*

IN the laſt verſe he commendeth her for a generall effect of her profitable demeanure to her husband, and amplified the ſame

ſame by the contrary negatiuely, and by the conſtancie, and continuance thereof. Now he beginneth to reckon vp certaine particular actions pertinent to her condition, and fit for her imployment, *ſhe ſeeketh*, if ſhe haue not of her owne, ſhe hearkeneth out where it is to be had, and accordingly prouideth not the things that are moſt fine, but moſt neceſſary: but theſe are fit for her ſex, and profitable for her houſe, inaſmuch as *wooll*, and *flaxe* being dreſſed, and perfected, ſerue to make couerings, and cloathings, for ſheetes alſo and naprie, and innumerable other vſes, *& laboureth cheerefully with her hands*, ſhe her ſelfe layeth her own hands to worke, as well as others, and taketh great delight, and pleaſure therein, to the end that by her example ſhe might draw them on: & notwithſtanding her eſtate and place be great, yet ſhe daineth to apply her ſelfe to thoſe things which ſeeme meane for her degree, as ſpinning, and carding, and other petty matters, which nice coy dames would not only count trifles, but too too baſe for them to ſtoupe vnto.

Verſe 14. *She is like the merchants ſhips, ſhe bringeth her food from a farre.*

AS in the former verſe, her care was declared in prouiding matter of imployment for her ſelfe, and her people, that ſhe would finde ſomewhat to worke vpon: ſo in this her induſtry, for food and prouiſion, is commended, that as ſhe would neither haue her ſelfe, nor thoſe that bee about her to want worke, or be remiſſe in it: ſo ſhe ordereth the matter, that there be no want of victuals or other neceſſaries whereby life is preſerued, and without competencie whereof no man can be able to labour, or doe any ſeruice with cheerefulnes: and in this reſpect ſhe is compared to the *merchants ſhips*, who carrying forth ſome one commoditie into forren countries, returne thence, bringing home ſundry others for it: for all countries are not inriched after one manner: ſome haue great ſtore of corne: others abound with vines, and wine: ſome haue plentie of fruits: others are ſtored with mines, and mettals: ſome

ſome breed abundance of ſheepe, wooll, and cattell. In like manner that which ſhe hath to ſpare at home, ſhe ſelleth to her neighbours which want the ſame: that which is wanting vnto her, ſhe buyeth of them that are able, and willing to vtter it for money, and wares, according as they can agree: but haue it ſhe will vpon good conditions, and compaſſe it by ſuch manner of trafficke as ſhall be commodious to both ſides.

Verſe 15. *She riſeth while it is yet night, and giueth meate to her houſhold, and a taske to her maidens.*

THe premiſes ſhew, that what was lacking of her owne ſhe would get ſupply of it from another place: ſhe would *ſeeke for wooll and flaxe*, that ſhe might haue whereabout to imploy her people; meate and food ſhe would be ſure to prouide, that penury ſhould not pinch her family. Now being ſtored with both ſorts, this text ſheweth how ſhe doth diſpenſe them, ſhe taketh great care that her houſhold haue the ſame miniſtred to them in due ſeaſon; and therefore *ſhe riſeth* from her ſleepe, and out of her bed, *while it is yet night*, very early in the morning, and before day, eſpecially in the winter ſeaſon, and giueth meate and drinke, that which is wholeſome and good, and as much as is needfull, and competent, *to her houſehold*, to her people of all ſorts, and degrees, to her children, to her ſeruants, to her men, to her maides, to the boyes, and to the girles, to euery age, to euery ſex, and to euery order: *and the taske* of worke and labour to her *maidens*, who after a more ſpeciall manner are at her command, and appointment for their ſeruice and buſines, then the men are: ſo that ſhee prouideth both meate, and worke for them: becauſe meate without worke breedeth idlenes, and other miſchiefes, and worke without meate cannot be performed.

Verſe 16. *She conſidereth a field, and buyeth it: and with the fruite of her hands ſhe planteth a vineyard.*

HEre *Bathſheba* relateth ȳ ſucceſſe of the good wifes prouidence, and paines taking, her ſubſtance, and her huſ-

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bands in and by her hands, and ſo well increaſed as that ſhe is able to make a purchaſe without greedines, or coueting after that which is other mens: without niggardlines, and pinching of her ſelfe: without wrong to her family: without neglect of righteouſnes, beneficence, and mercy: without iniury vnto, or circumuention of the ſeller; whom neceſſity compelleth, or good conſiderations induce to depart with his land: *ſhe conſidereth a field*, offered to be ſold, whether it lie fit for her: whether ſhe be able to pay for it: whether it bee worth her mony: whether the title of it be ſound, and good: whether ſhe ſhall not hurt the ſeller, or any other man in dealing for it; *and getteth it*, accepteth of the bargaine, and concludeth to goe thorow with it, hath the aſſurance paſſed to her ſelfe, or her husband, maketh payment for it: *with the fruit of her hands*, with the gaine of her labour, trauell, care, and diligence: for a laborious hand is compared to a fruitfull tree, and both the good which thereby ſhe doth, and the profit which thereby ſhe getteth, vnto fruite, *ſhe planteth a vineyard*, in the ground, or field, which ſhe hath bought, or otherwiſe imployeth it to the beſt commoditie according to the nature of the ſoile, as in graſing, tillage, gardening, or the like: ſo circumſpect and conſiderat ſhe is in making the purchaſe, and ſo prouident and thrifty to conuert it to the beſt vſe.

Verſe 17. *She girdeth her loynes with ſtrength, and ſtrengtheneth her armes.*

AS we haue heard what ſhe doth, and getteth: ſo are we informed hereafter what manner ſhe worketh, and followeth her buſines, *ſhe girdeth her loynes with ſtrength*: for the vnderſtanding whereof we muſt know, that anciently it hath bin, and ſtill is the manner of the people in thoſe countries, to be clothed with long garments, which are no ſmall impediment to their gate, and trauels, and for this cauſe when they would goe apace, and doe any thing with diligence, or fight with their enemies, they did truſſe vp, and gird their garments about their loines: and becauſe great ſtrength (as we know)

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is in the armes, therefore ſhe maketh ſpeciall mention of them, which is nothing elſe, but ſtrongly, and with courage to ſet their hands to the worke: ſo that it is as much as if *Bathſheba* ſhould haue ſaid, This vertuous womon whom I commend, dealeth not in her vocation remiſſely, and by the halues, but addreſſeth her ſelfe with remoueall of euery impediment to the ſerious performance of her duety, ſhe prepareth her ſelfe to her affaires as if ſhe were to runne a race, or wreſtle with a champion, ſhe flieth about her worke, and ſetteth on it with a ſetled reſolution: her garments hung not looſe about her, but ſhe tucketh them vp that ſhe may be the more nimble: neither doth a little paines weary her out, ſhe giueth not place to any diſcouragements, but animateth her ſelfe, and leaueth not off vntill ſhe haue gone thorow with her enterpriſes.

Verſe 18. *She perceiueth that her marchandiſe is good: her candle goeth not out by night.*

Bathſheba proceedeth to make an narration of the thriftie wifes proceeding, conſtant going forward in her good courſe of diligence, and ſedulitie; and ſheweth firſt by what meanes ſhe is incited to it, and afterward declareth vnto what a degree of paines-taking ſhe hath attained: for the former, *ſhe perceiueth* by experience, as comfortable to her heart, as delightfull food is vnto her taſte, *that her marchandiſe is good*: that her prudent gouernment, and the wiſe diſpoſing of her matters turne to as good profit for the benefit, and increaſe of her husbands, and her owne eſtate, as if ſhe did exerciſe any commodious trafficke, or merchandiſe: for the latter, *her candle goeth not out by night*, becauſe ſhe ſpeedeth ſo well in her buſineſſe, and her worke findeth ſo good ſucceſſe, ſhe will tarrie at it, as long as ſhe may, and leaue off no ſooner then needs ſhe muſt, and therefore vſeth her ſelfe to vigilancy, and watchfulnes, ſitting vp late, as being loath to loſe any time, reſpecting her calling, more then her eaſe: and yet ſhe doth not oppreſſe her body by abridging her ſelfe of needfull reſt: for it is a *Synechdoche*, the whole night being put for a part.

Verſe 19.

Verse 19. *She layeth her hands on the spindle, and her hands handle the distaffe.*

AS she sitteth vp long in the night, so testimony is giuen of her how she bestoweth her time before she goeth to bed, not in idle discourses, not in gaming, or vaine sports, not in banquetting, or preparing of iuncates, not in vaine fruitlesse exercises: but *she layeth her hands on the spindle, and her hands take hold of the distaffe*, she is not grieued to apply or occupy her selfe about those things, which might seeme vile, and contemptible: she thinketh not her selfe dishonoured, neither her hands blemished, or wearied with spinning, or carding, or other such like huswifely exercises.

Verse 20. *She stretcheth out her hands to the poore, yea she stretcheth out her hands to the needy.*

HItherto we had a description of her getting, and her great iudustry therefore: now she is commended for her vsing of it, that many are the better for that which she possesseth, and in the first place the *poore* are mentioned, *she stretcheth out her hands to the poore*, albeit she be very intentiue at her worke, and willing to doe as much good as she can to her husband, yet she is not led with couetousnes, nor desire of decking her selfe: neither is all her care to prouide for her own family, but also she hath pity and compassion on the poore, and miserable, not with words only, but really, and in deed: neither is liberality wrested from her by impudent importunity, but she voluntarily reacheth out her hand vnto them, and that not once, but often, as the repetition of the words doe intimate.

Verse 21. *She is not afraid of snow: for all her house are clothed with double garments.*

AS the care of her family doth not make her careless of the poore: so neither doth her liberalitie to the poore, depriue

depriue the family of ought y is needfull for the: for ſhe ſheweth her mercie without diſtruſt, & without thinking that ſhe or hers in the hard time ſhal be grieued or pinched with need; ſhe hath taken ſo good order time enough for the good eſtate of her own people, that that which is beſtowed vpon the needie, ſhall not be detracted from their allowance: the hungrie ſhall not be relieued with their food: the naked ſhall not be cloathed with their apparell: for mercie is neuer contrary vnto righteouſneſſe, neither is that which was well, and in due manner giuen vnto the one, preiudiciall and hurtfull vnto the other: *ſhe is not* then *afraid of ſnow for her familie*, ſhe dreadeth not hard weather, or ſharpe ſeaſons: *for all her familie is cloathed with double garments*, ſhe prouideth afore hand ſhift of warme and good cloathes for children, and ſeruants, and all vnder her roofe, and at her finding, that they may be armed againſt the extreame cold of winter.

Verſe 22. *She maketh her couerings of tapeſtrie: her cloathing is ſilke and purple.*

AS the poore fare the better for her thiftines, and the people of her houſe goe the better clad thereby: now in the third place is ſhewed that her ſelfe alſo enioyeth the benefit thereof: ſhe furniſheth her ſelfe with ornaments fit for her degree; of the *woll* and *flaxe* ſhe got at the beginning ſhe worketh, and prepareth ſtore of comely couerings for board and bed, with hangings for her chambers, and garments for her owne bodie: for God diſalloweth not in women decent apparell, nor rich attire, ſo that they keepe themſelues within compaſſe of modeſtie, and exalt not themſelues aboue their callings, and giue not place to oſtentation, or an high minde, and play the good huſwiues to get, or ſaue, and be helpers to ſupport their huſbands eſtate.

Verſ. 23. *Her huſband is knowne in the gate, when he ſitteth among the elders of the land.*

HEr beneficence, by meanes of her thrift and frugalitie, is extended to diuers ſorts, as to the poore, to her domeſti-

call people, to her owne ſelfe, and ſo wiſely alſo are matters ordered, that her huſband is nothing the leſſe able to ſet forth himſelfe in due manner according to his dignitie: but is of principall note amongſt many for his robes, and other rich ornaments: *he is knowne in the gates*, he is noted, ſpoken of, and reuerenced in the place of iudgement, where he ſitteth on the bench with other rulers of the countrie.

Verſ. 24. *She maketh fine linnen, and ſelleth it, and deliuereth girdles to the Merchants.*

BAthſheba reporteth that the good huſwife contenteth not her ſelfe only with preparing of garments for the vſe of her ſeruants, for her owne vſe, and for her husbands vſe: but that ſhe maketh comely ornaments to ſell, to the end ſhe may inrich her eſtate. The Hebrew word tranſlated *ſheetes*, doth not only ſignifie any ſuch fine linnen as lieth on the bed, but any linnen veſture that great perſonages were wont to weare: *and deliuereth girdles*, vnder one comprehending many, *vnto the Merchants*, who trade in diuers cities, or countries, buying that in one place, which they intend to ſell in another: and in ſelling vnto him, it appeareth that her dealing loueth light, ſhe purloyneth not, nor maketh away her husbands goods in hudder mudder. It was ſaid before in the 14. verſe that ſhe was *like the ſhips of merchants*, not to thoſe of Pirats, or Rouers, ſhe dealeth in her owne huſwiferie, and in things of her owne making, not making away her husbands neceſſarie commodities, or things of his getting: neither doth ſhe make money of that which cannot be ſpared, whereby ſhe ſhould leaue her houſe vnprouided: neither paſſeth ſhe away ought againſt her husbands will, or for any other end, then for his beneſit.

Verſ. 25. *Strength and honour are her cloathing, and ſhe ſhall reioyce in time to come.*

SHe hath ſpoken of the corporall veſture and cloathing, wherewith the vertuous woman hath decked her ſelfe, and her

her husband, and couered all the reſt of her familie: and now to ſhew that ſhe ſetteth not her affection vpon ſuch ornaments, as doe fooliſh, vaine and curious women, which deſire to be gay in the eyes of the world: it is ſaid that ſhe hath another garment farre more excellent, which is *ſtrength*, the force and efficacie of Gods ſpirit, whereby ſhe is confirmed in beleeuing in patience, and in weldoing: and the other is *honour*, which is the fruite of the ſame, the eſtimation which ſhe hath with God and his people, and the euidence of her innocencie and goodneſſe in the hearts of the wicked. This her ſpirituall attire is of all others the moſt ſumptuous and pretious: this maketh men and women gorgeous in the eſtimation of God and his Angels: this is a durable ſuite, which the longer it is worne, the brighter it will ſhine, and the better it will be: this can no baſe perſon euer put on, all that are clad with it are honourable, *and ſhe ſhall reioyce in the time to come*: the Hebrew word ſignifieth ſhe *laugheth at it*, ſhe is ſecure of her future eſtate, and out of dread of all accidents and occurrents, that at any time may befall her: ſhe is not troubled with the feares of loſſes, and croſſes, of changes and alterations: ſhe is not troubled at the remembrance of ſicknes, or child-bearing, or of the day of iudgement: yea on the contrary ſide, ſhe reioyceth in the expectation of her end, of the life to come, and of that bleſſed reward of happineſſe which remaineth for all the faithfull.

Verſe 26. *She openeth her mouth with wiſedome, and the law of grace is vnder her lips.*

IN the former verſe ſhe was praiſed for the graces of her heart, and here for the wiſe, fruitfull, and gracious ſpeeches of her lips: *ſhe openeth her mouth with wiſedome*, ſhe talketh not raſhly, vndiſcreetly, or vnſeaſonably of matters; but prudently, and ſoberly, *and the law of grace is in her lips*, ſhe ſpeaketh not of toyes, or of trifles, but of faith, of repentance, of the feare of God, and of ſuch other duties and points of religion, and ſhe laboureth as much as ſhe can to prouoke vnto

liberalitie, mercie, and weldoing: the ſtreame and current of her conferences tend to this, that ſhe may make men more godly, more righteous, and mercifull: that God may haue his honour and ſeruice, that poore people may receiue mercie and kindnes, and the ſoules of as many as ſhe can procure may be confirmed in the hope of ſaluation.

Verſ.27. *She looketh well to the waies of her familie, and eateth not the bread of idlenes.*

SHe looketh well to the waies of her houſehold] As her mouth is ſeaſoned with grace, ſo are her eyes with intentiue watchfulnes: ſhe is reſembled to one who ſtanding on his watch moueth his eyes hither and thither, to ſee who is comming, and who is going: For it much concerneth gouernours heedfully to reſpect the behauiour of their people: by this they ſhall know how to direct, whom to rebuke, correct, incourage, reward, retaine, or caſt off: by this much ſin againſt God is preuented, or reformed: hereby a gouernour ſhal keep his people from that hurt and danger, whereinto otherwiſe they will be obnoxious: by this they ſhall preſerue their families from that pollution whereby it is like to bee defiled, and their ſtates from ſuch loſſes and waſte, as through their careleſnes they may ſuſtaine, *and eateth not the bread of idlenes*, ſhe is not ſlothfull, ſpending her time idlely, and looking to nothing, but ſetteth her owne hand to worke, and looketh to all that be about her, that they ſhall performe their duties: thus *ſhe eateth not the bread of idlenes*, for which ſhe neuer tooke paines, but the foode of labour and trauell, wherein Gods children enioy his bleſſing to their happineſſe. Pſal.128.2.

Verſ.28. *Her children riſe vp and call her bleſſed, and her huſband praiſeth her*, ſaying,

Verſe 29. *Many daughters haue done vertuouſly, but thou ſurmounteſt them all.*

NOw are we come vnto the reward which is due vnto this good woman, for her vertuous behauiour and graces, and

and that is, *praise*, and commendation, which is yeelded vnto her principally by those which are neerest about her, as *husband*, and *children*, who are best acquainted with her waies, and tasted most of the fruites thereof: for it is the best honour to approue ones selfe to them which are most priuie to all their courses: others speake at randome, and by gesse, but these by experience, and vpon knowledge: prouided that it be not in feare, or flatterie, from which the holy Ghost freeth the testimonie giuen of this good matron: *her children*, sonnes and daughters, growing in age, wisedome, and discretion, and hauing a true knowledge of the care that she had of them, and feeling the good which she had done for them in their vertuous education, *rise vp*, yeeld reuerence, and doe obeysance to her in dutifull manner: For so much that gesture doth many times import, as when it is said, *Thou shalt rise vp before the hoarie head, and honour the face of the old man, and feare thy God.* Leuit. 19. 32. *And call her blessed*, doe not onely make prayers, and offer thankes to God for her, but speake of her wise sayings, and worthie facts, and the whole course of her Christian conuersation, and conclude that God hath made her a most happy and fortunate woman: *her husband also praiseth her*, speaketh of her in way of commendation, and to her also in good meaning and without dissimulation, *many daughters haue done vertuously, but thou surmountest them all*; testifying that she is the best that euer he knew: as if he should haue said, Be it spoken without dispraise of others, you doe so well satisfie me, as that I know not where the like is to be found: *many daughters*, not maides onely, but women, and married wiues, *haue done vertuously*, towards their husbands, household, children, neighbours, the poore and needie, and themselues, and that in many great and gracious respects: by this meanes she hath her due without wrong to others, (for he doth not deprane others to boast her, nor gathereth the arguments of her praise from the vices of her neighbours, but from their vertues and commendable qualities): *but thou surmountest them all*, in fidelitie, in wisedome, in good huswiferie, in mercie, and in pietie: For euery one ought to bee best pleased with the good

waies of his owne yoke-fellow: the nature of loue will induce one to it, and equitie alſo: becauſe the wife findeth moſt benefit by the graces and good dealing of her husband: and ſo doth the husband by the good qualities and actions of his wife: and hereby the one of them ſhall giue great incouragement to the other. Whereas on the contrary ſide, when all things are ill taken, and nothing is pleaſing that the one ſaith and doth to the other, it killeth all mutual good affections one towards another, and vtterly extinguiſheth all cheerefulnes in them.

Verſ. 30. *Fauour is deceitfull, and beautie vaine: but a woman that feareth the Lord ſhall be praiſed.*

THeſe words are a confirmation of the premiſes by a compariſon, wherein a godly woman is preferred before a *beautifull*, and pietie before *fauour*, or any other externall graceings: For all outward ſpecious qualities, and excellency whatſoeuer, are comprehended vnder *beautie* and *fauour*. Now whoſe words theſe are it is vncertaine, whether the husbands, or *Bathſhebaes*, or *Salomons*; but that they are the words of the holy Ghoſt it is moſt certaine. *Fauour is deceitful*, comelines of perſonage, or any outward grace, is a ſhadow which hath no ſubſtance, *and beautie vaine*, a good colour, or a good complexion, is but a fading flower that will quickly be withered, and decay: *but a woman that feareth the Lord*, which is godly and religious, *ſhall be praiſed*, ſhe (by Gods bleſſing) ſhall obtaine true glorie: For no honour is ſound but that which groweth from grace; that onely hath the promiſe, the
1. Sam. 2. 30. Lord ſaying, *them that honour me will I honour*. And all earthly things are periſhable, or guilefull; as parentage, wealth, ſtrength, &c. a man may haue them, and yet be very baſe and contemptible: and what ſhall wee ſay of goodly ſtature, and faire faces? may they not haue many vile vices accompanying them? For diuers of good making, and well fauoured countenances, haue deformed manners, and ill fauoured conditions: as *Abſalom*, *Adonijah*, and ſundrie filthie ſtrumpets:

and

and be it that beautie bee not ſtained with any notorious crimes, or miſbehauiour; yet there can be no conſtancie, or perpetuitie in the ſame; ſicknes, ſorrow, the ſmall poxe, or other ſuch like accidents will quickly deface it: and it dependeth onely in the eſtimation of mens eyes, whoſe likings are vncertaine: for many are carried from well fauoured wiues, vpon whom firſt they doted, vnto ill fauoured harlots, and with the ſight of their faces are rauiſhed: on the contrary ſide, holineſſe, righteouſnes, and the graces of Gods holy ſpirit doe giue a luſtre vnto all, and make them looke with an amiable countenance: according as Eccleſiaſtes ſaith, *The wiſedome of a man maketh his face to ſhine, and the ſtrength of his countenance ſhall be doubled.* Women, men, or whoſoeuer they be, cannot but much be ſet by, if they ſet by Gods word, and conſcionably obey it: God taketh delight in them, and inclineth the affections of his people vnto thē, and maketh the wicked to ſtand in feare of them: no ſicknes can disfigure a gratious perſon, nor death it ſelfe, nor the graue which totally marreth all corporall excellencie: Such one ſhall liue in honour, dye in honour, and leaue his memoriall in honour, and appeare before the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt in honour.

Verſ. 31. *Giue her of the fruite of her hands, and let her owne workes praiſe her in the gate.*

FOr the knitting vp and concluſion of all, huſbands are called vpon, and prouoked to praiſe their good wiues really, as well as vocally, in deede as well as in word to recompence her paines, and good ſeruice with due rewards. *Giue her of the fruite of her hands,* let her enioy the benefit of her owne labours, let her haue allowance for foode, apparell, furniture, and all meete expenſes liberally, and largely, and anſwerably to her faithfulnes, and fruitfulnes, *and let her owne workes praiſe her in the gate,* euen as in games and conflicts the conquerors are both rewarded with ſome price, and praiſed openly in the publike aſſembly by proclamation: ſo let this worthie woman

hitherto

hitherto spoken of be prouided, for that her husbands largesse may be a testimonie in the Church, in the market, in meetings of neighbours and friends, and in all assemblies, that she hath deserued well, and he vpon due cause doth deale so bountifully with her: and if God take him away before her, let him by leauing her an ample portion, according to his estate, publish to the world that he hath found her a beneficiall yoke-fellow.

FINIS.